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To help create among the American people the unity and mutual understanding resulting from a common citizenship, a common belief in democracy and the ideals of liberty, the placing of the common good before the interests of any group, and the acceptance, in fact as well as in law, of all citizens, whatever their national or racial origins, as equal partners in American society.

To further an appreciation of what each group has contributed to America, to uphold the freedom to be different, and to encourage the growth of an American culture which will be truly representative of all the elements that make up the American people.

To overcome intolerance and discrimination because of foreign birth or descent, race or nationality.

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## RENDEZVOUS WITH AMERICA

MELVIN B. TOLSON

### I

Time unhinged the gates  
Of Plymouth Rock and Jamestown and Ellis Island,  
And worlds of men with hungers of body and soul  
Hazarded the wilderness of waters,  
Cadenced their destinies  
With the potters'-wheeling miracles  
Of mountain and valley, prairie and river.

*These were the men  
Who bridged the ocean  
With arches of dreams  
And piers of devotion:*

Messiahs from the Sodoms and Gomorrahs of the Old World,  
Searchers for Cathay and Cipango and El Dorado,  
Mystics from Oubangui Chari and Uppsala,  
Serfs from Perugia and Tonle Sap,  
Jailbirds from Newgate and Danzig,  
Patriots from Yokosuka and Stralsund,  
Scholars from Oxford and Leyden,  
Beggars from Bagdad and Montmartre,  
Traders from the Tyrrhenian Sea and Mona Passage,  
Sailors from the Skagerrak and Bosphorus Strait,  
Iconoclasts from Buteshire and Zermatt.

### II

These were the men of many breeds  
Who mixed their bloods and sowed their seeds.  
Designed in gold and shaped of dross,  
They raised the Sword beside the Cross.

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These were the men who laughed at odds  
And scoffed at dooms and diced with gods,  
Who freed their souls from inner bars  
And mused with prophets and sang with stars.

These were the men of prose and rhyme  
Who telescoped epochs of time,  
Who knew the feel of spinal verve  
And walked the straight line of the curve.

These were the men of iron lips  
Who challenged Dawn's apocalypse,  
Who married Earth and Sea and Sky  
And died to live and lived to die.

These were the men who dared to be  
The sires of things they could not see,  
Whose martyred and rejected bones  
Became the States' foundation-stones!

### III

Into the arteries of the Republic poured  
The confusions of bloods,  
The omegas of peoples,  
The moods of continents,  
The melting-pots of seas,  
The flotsams of isms,  
The flavors of tongues,  
The yesterdays of martyrs,  
The tomorrows of utopias.

Into the matrix of the Republic poured  
White gulf streams of Europe,  
Black tidal waves of Africa,  
Yellow neap tides of Asia,  
Niagaras of the little people.

America?

America is the Black Man's country,  
The Red Man's, the Yellow Man's,  
The Brown Man's, the White Man's.



## RENDEZVOUS WITH AMERICA

America?

An international river with a thousand tributaries!  
A magnificent cosmorama with myriad patterns and colors!  
A giant forest with loin-roots in a hundred lands!  
A mighty orchestra with a thousand instruments playing  
*America!*

### IV

I see America in Daniel Boone,  
As he scouts in the judas night of a forest aisle;  
In big Paul Bunyan, as he guillotines  
The timber avalanche that writhes a mile.

I see America in Jesse James,  
As his legends match his horse's epic stride;  
In big John Henry, as his hammer beats  
The monster shovel that quakes the mountainside.

I see America in Casey Jones,  
As he mounts No. 4 with the seal of death in his hand;  
In Johnny Appleseed, as his miracles  
Fruit the hills and valleys of our Promised Land.

I see America in DiMaggio,  
As his bat cuts a vacuum in the paralyzed air;  
In brown Joe Louis, surfed in white acclaim,  
As he fights his country's cause in Madison Square.

I see America in Thomas Paine,  
As he pinnacles the freedoms tyrants ban;  
In young Abe Lincoln, tanned by prairie suns,  
As he splits his rails and thinks the rights of man.

### V

A blind man said,  
"Look at the kikes."

And I saw  
Rosenwald sowing the seeds of culture in the Black Belt,  
Michelson measuring the odysseys of invisible worlds,  
Brandeis opening the eyes of the blind to the Constitution,  
Boas translating the oneness of mankind.

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A blind man said,  
"Look at the dagos."

And I saw

La Guardia shaping the cosmos of pyramided Manhattan,  
Brumidi verving the Capitol frescoes of "Washington at Yorktown,"  
Caruso scaling the Alpine ranges of drama with the staff of song,  
Toscanini enchanting earthward the music of the spheres.

A blind man said,  
"Look at the chinks."

And I saw

Lin Yutang crying the World Charter in the white man's wilderness,  
Dr. Chen charting the voyages of bacteria in the Lilly Laboratories,  
Lu Cong weaving plant-tapestries in the Department of Agriculture,  
Madame Chiang Kai-shek interpreting the Orient and the Occident.

A blind man said,  
"Look at the bohunks."

And I saw

Sikorsky blue-printing the cabala of the airways,  
Stokowski imprisoning the magic of symphonies with a baton,  
Zvak erecting St. Patrick's Cathedral in a forest of skyscrapers,  
Dvořák enwombing the multiple soul of the New World.

A blind man said,  
"Look at the niggers."

And I saw

Black Samson mowing down Hessians with a scythe at Brandywine,  
Marian Anderson bewitching continents with the talisman of art,  
Douglass hurling philippics of freedom from tombstones,  
Private Brooks dying at the feet of MacArthur in Bataan.

## VI

America can sing a lullaby  
When slipped dusk steals down the terraced sky;  
Then in a voice to wake the Plymouth dead,  
Embattled hordes of tyranny defy.

America can join the riotous throng  
And sell her virtues for a ribald song;  
Then give the clothes that hide her nakedness  
To help her sister nations carry on.

## RENDEZVOUS WITH AMERICA

America can worship gods of brass  
And bow before the pomp of Breed and Class;  
Then gather to her bosom refugees  
That champion the causes of the Mass.

America can loose a world of laughter  
To shake the States from cornerstone to rafter;  
Then gird her mighty loins with corded strength  
In the volcanic nightmare of disaster.

America can knot her arms and brow  
And guide across frontiers the untamed plow;  
Then beat the plowshares into vengeful swords  
To keep a rendezvous with Justice now.

## VII

Sometimes,  
Uncle Sam

Pillows his head on the Statue of Liberty,  
Tranquilizes himself on the soft couch of the Corn Belt,  
Laves his feet in the Golden Gate,  
And sinks into the nepenthe of slumber.

And the termites of anti-Semitism busy themselves  
And the Ku Klux Klan marches with rope and faggot  
And the money-changers plunder the Temple of Democracy  
And the copperheads start boring from within  
And the robber barons pillage the countryside  
And the con men try to jimmy the Constitution  
And the men of good will are hounded over the Land  
And the People groan in the *tribulum* of tyranny.

Then

Comes the roar of cannon at Fort Sumter  
Or the explosion of a Teapot Dome  
Or the Wall Street crash of '29  
Or the thunderclap of bombs at Pearl Harbor!

## VIII

I have a rendezvous with America  
At Plymouth Rock,  
Where the *Mayflower* lies

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Battered beam on beam  
By titan-chested waves that heave and shock  
And cold December winds  
That in the riggings pound their fists and scream.  
*Here, Now,*  
The Pilgrim Fathers draw  
The New World's testament of faith and law:  
A government of and for and by the People,  
A pact of peers who share and bear and plan,  
A government which leaves men free and equal  
And yet knits men together as one man.

I have a rendezvous with America  
At Valley Forge.  
These are the times that try men's souls  
And fetter cowards to their servile goals.  
Through yonder gorge  
Hunger and Cold, Disease and Fear,  
Advance with treasonous blows,  
And bayonets of the winds stab through  
Our winter soldiers' clothes,  
And bloody footsteps stain the deep December snows.  
*Here, Now,*  
Our winter soldiers keep the faith  
And keep their powder dry . . .  
To do or die!

I have a rendezvous with America  
This Seventh of December.  
The virginal freshness of Pearl Harbor's dawn,  
The peace of seas that thief the breath,  
I shall remember.  
Then out of yonder Sunrise Land of Death  
The fascist spawn  
Strikes like the talons of the mad harpoon,  
Strikes like the moccasin in the black lagoon,  
Strikes like the fury of the raw typhoon.  
The traitor's ruse and the traitor's lie,  
Pearl Harbor's ruins of sea and sky,  
Shall live with me till the day I die.  
*Here, Now,*  
At Pearl Harbor, I remember  
I have a rendezvous at Plymouth Rock and Valley Forge  
This Seventh of December.

## RENDEZVOUS WITH AMERICA

### IX

In these midnight dawns  
Of the Gethsemanes and the Golgothas of peoples,  
I put my ear to the common ground of America.

From the brows of mountains  
And the breasts of rivers  
And the flanks of prairies  
And the wombs of valleys  
Swells the Victory March of the Republic,  
In the masculine allegro of factories  
And the blues rhapsody of express trains,  
In the bass crescendo of power dams  
And the nocturne adagio of river boats,  
In the sound and fury of threshing machines  
And the clarinetting needles of textile mills,  
In the fortissimo hammers of shipyards  
And the diatonic picks of coal mines,  
In the oboe rhythms of cotton gins  
And the sharpened notes of salmon traps,  
In the belting harmonics of lumber camps  
And the drumming derricks of oil fields.

In these midnight dawns  
Of the vulture Philistines of the unquiet skies  
And the rattlesnake Attilas of the upturned seas . . .

In these midnight dawns  
Of the Gethsemanes and the Golgothas of peoples,  
America stands  
Granite-footed as the Rocky Mountains  
Beaten by the whirlpool belts of wet winds,  
Deep-chested as the Appalachians  
Sunning valleys in the palms of their hands,  
Tough-tendoned as the Cumberlands  
Shouldering the truck caravans of US 40,  
Clean-flanked as the lavender walls of Palo Duro  
Washed by the living airs of canyon rivers,  
Eagle-hearted as the Pacific redwoods  
Uprearing their heads in the dawns and dusks of ages.

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Melvin B. Tolson is director of drama and debate at Wiley College, Marshall, Texas; columnist for the Washington Tribune; and author of the striking poem recently published in the Atlantic, "Dark Symphony," now being set to music by Earl Robinson.

## ADMITTED AS A CITIZEN

FRANK KINGDON

ONE lunch hour in London I bought a Gladstone bag and a ticket for Portland, Maine. When I went home from work that night, I took them with me and announced to my parents that I was leaving for the United States.

After their first shock, they entered into my plans, and the intervening ten days before I left were filled with intense activity, particularly on the part of my mother, who washed, mended, and darned every stitch of clothing that I owned.

I was the child of their old age, and I suppose the man seventy-six must hardly have understood the eager hope of the boy not yet eighteen, but no word crossed his lips save an encouraging one; the woman sixty-two had kept enough of her youth to remember a golden year when as a young nurse she had travelled in America, so her eyes glowed with all that to her was memory and to her son anticipation. When the last day came, Father stood up for the final embrace and Mother went with me to the train. When I waved to her from the moving carriage window, the days of dependence were over and the future was a dream and a deed to be faced alone. Southampton was a way-station on the road to the Free Country, and the lights along the Channel were the fading lamps of a house the traveller had left behind.

The next train I boarded took me from Portland to Wiscasset, Maine, thirty-five hundred miles away from Southampton. I had left my native land and come home.

I knew at once that I was home. All that was in me answered back with subtle

kinship to all I found here. It was strange that it should be so. When I landed at Portland on that January day in 1912, the scene was unlike anything I had ever known, the streets thick with snow, the people wrapped in fur coats and hats, the vehicles on runners. The sight much more resembled my imaginings of Russia than any anticipation I had had of America. The air was colder than any I had ever known, but it did not cut me; I breathed it deeply, filling my lungs with it. It was the air of a free land. Even physically, it could not chill me, for the blood of a boy on the threshold of his great adventure carries its own heat.

As I stood on the sidewalk of Portland, behind me lay the land of aristocracy against which I had rebelled, and ahead was the country without kings and lords, the country which was mine by my own declaration of independence. Here was the soil that nourished free men. As the white landscape slipped by the window of the railway carriage, every mile took me deeper into the embrace of America. By the time we reached Wiscasset, I was an American, dedicated with every pulse of my youthful being to the land I had chosen for my own.

I have always counted it good fortune that I came to know America through the State of Maine and that within the State I learned first the ways of the small town. Small towns are neighborhoods in which each one knows his neighbor's life, where every person plays many parts. William

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Washburn, snuffle and all, was postmaster, trader, insurance agent, town clerk, adviser and arbitrator in personal affairs and disputes, and general commentator on local and national events. He was not an easy man. The steel of his moral judgments made him stern, but his integrity was beyond question and the respect he enjoyed was his by right of personal quality. In a small town individuals have a chance to develop their own unique quirks. They are not lost in a crowd. They are not smoothed by constant contact with strangers into carefully manicured reproductions of what artificial custom has decreed to be the model of a polite man. Therefore, getting my first impressions of America from such people, I learned the flavor of American individuality and the authentic genius of American independence of thought and action.

As I have broadened my acquaintance with the country at large, I have found that Broadway is only Main Street written large; New York is Harmony, Maine, in tails and top-hat. There is a typically American accent in experience. It runs through the whole breadth of the American community, overriding local and regional divisions. Once in a while some individual like Will Rogers with his drawl, or Franklin Roosevelt out of Groton and Harvard, gives it expression. Anybody really of the American scene can understand the rough, hard-bitten wit, the gentle, deflating humor, and the underlying idealism which give the American tang to their words. They echo the overtones of a continent.

This characteristic quality of Americans assures a kind of national homogeneity of mind and spirit that strangers to our country never quite seem to grasp. Failing to perceive it, they find us incomprehensible and declare we are no nation at all. We seem to them a mongrel people, a hybrid mob, a congeries of unassimilated gangs,

or, in the less elegant language of one of our sternest critics, "a bastard nation." They have no premises for the concept of nationality except those of tribal homogeneity; consequently they see here only English and Irish, Poles and Russians, Greeks and Italians, French and Germans, Scandinavians and Dutch. These are the stereotypes of their thinking; they do not go behind them to the American fact of men and women achieving a community in which the old tribal heritages are blended not opposed. They look upon our diversities as divisions. Meanwhile, we just go ahead and live as Americans, working out a powerful and prosperous community of interest and, what is more,



creating a comprehensive group character.

I do not assert that we do this easily or always in a spirit of sweetness and light. Down in that Maine village Hans Schwabel, his wife, and his twin sons had their troubles. The father and mother spoke with a German accent, they were not too readily adjustable to their neigh-

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bors, and these neighbors did not accept them quickly. They had to suffer a sort of perpetual community heckling. But the twins were courteous and worked hard in school. At first they were bashful and abnormally reserved. Gradually, however, they won general approval and by their high school days were popular participants in all student affairs. Perhaps Hans and his wife never quite caught the distinctive flavor of America, but certainly the two boys did. Down by the lake was another "foreign" family, Portuguese in background, farmers by occupation. This father and his three husky sons were as natively part of the community as the corn in their silo. Here is the answer to the question whether one born in another country can ever completely identify himself with the United States. The plain fact is that we do. The oath of allegiance we take to the United States is but the outward formalizing of an inner resolution. It is the solemn seal placed upon our already loving identification of ourselves with the country of our choice.

This was certainly my experience, for by the time I stood in the Massachusetts District Court to be sworn in as a citizen I already had five years of active participation in community affairs behind me.

I landed here in 1912. In 1914, when I was not yet of age and had not yet my first papers, I travelled over a large part of the State of Maine stumping for the Bull Moose Party as earnestly as though I were twice the age and a chip off the Mayflower. Political feeling ran high that year, and when I recall that the tally in our town stood Democrat 51, Republican 51, Progressive 49, I need not emphasize how vividly I learned the intensity with which partisan heat can rise, and the personal attacks it can inspire. During the actual campaign I was really frightened by the bitterness that seemed to be accumulating, and I certainly bade farewell to any hopes

of personal popularity. When the fight was over, however, and the votes were in, I discovered how quickly recriminations are forgotten. We all resumed our normal relationships and my chair was waiting by the stove in the store.

That early experience taught me both the cruelty and the fairness of America. No man can stand up in this country who cannot "take it." The minute he raises his head to gain attention he will be attacked on every possible ground. His motives, his private life, his intelligence, and his ambition will all be scrutinized, scoured, and caricatured. He will be painted as a monster and a parasite. This process of calumny is a sort of unconscious test to which the American public submits all candidates for influence. If a man can face it and go about his business, he stands a chance of consolidating his influence; if he cannot, he is done. I learned this in my first two years and I learned it in the intimacy of the small town where every word is repeated and every item of gossip barbed. But I also learned that after the first shock is past, this ruthlessness begets its own kind of tolerance and a man is accepted for what he is, that is, for what the thrust and fire of the give-and-take have proved him. This ultimate judgment of a man is likely to be remarkably fair.

Once having been toughened by exposure to the full force of small-town gossip, the less intimate malevolence of larger places bounces off one's hide without making a dent. One comes to have a remarkable respect for the general skepticism of the people, but is not misled into thinking this skepticism necessarily begets cynicism.

I remember the debates we used to have in the Grange meetings. As we sat around the Hall, we all knew each other well; no man or woman rose to speak without every other person in the room



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discounting every word by a valuation of the speaker's personality based on years of observation and trading. This did not mean that nobody listened to anybody else or that no common decision could be reached. Quite the contrary. Each individual was heard as an individual, and the whole group achieved decisions genuinely



expressing a common mind. When I call up the faces of Will Herrick, Sarepta Haines, Walter Bemis, and Del Pattee, I think of people who had great influence, yet whose personal foibles and social peccadilloes were items of common speech. Nobody thought of them, or their dozen counterparts in town, as oracles; here was the skepticism. Everybody did think of them as people who had over the years won their right to advise their fellow-townsmen; and this was no cynicism. Before men made up their minds, they wanted to know what these people thought; and this, I take it, is the essence of leadership in a democracy.

I could name another list of those who always spoke on every issue but whom nobody wanted to hear; in these cases skepticism did breed cynicism, but it was a

fair judgment and this fact too is part of the relentless sifting that goes into the discovery and recognition of the natural leaders in a democratic community. I did not analyze this interplay of skepticism and acceptance in those early days, but I now recognize that the habits then unconsciously absorbed were a genuine adjustment to the kind of critical selection of leaders which operates here in a way not quite like that anywhere else in the world.

Judged by certain conventional standards, Charles Marble was not the best or most attractive man in our town, but he had an undoubted gift for public administration and was elected First Selectman year after year. He was the natural political leader and everybody recognized it, even those who were most explosive about his fondness for artificial stimulants of one kind or another. Because I saw the way he became the accepted choice of his little Maine town, I can understand and rejoice in the natural re-election of Fiorello La Guardia, so "ornery" and so splenetic under certain provocations, to the Mayoralty of New York. He is uniquely the man for the job and the people know it. Democratic leadership thrives on such authentic communication of personal quality.

By the time four years were up, I had visited every home in town, spent countless evenings discussing town affairs around the cracker-barrel, pitched hay in summer, cut ice in winter, made center-field on the town baseball team, and married a daughter of the village. This was no carefully designed program. It was the natural identification of myself with people I liked and a community that was home to me. I never thought about any conscious breaking of loyalty to the land from which I came, for, by an unconscious psychological process, I became so engrossed in being a member of my little community, which was America to me,

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that I had neither strength nor will left over to be even fractionally anything else. I literally had no resources with which to support a hyphen. I ceased altogether to think of myself as English, and even today it comes as a shock when somebody in private conversation or public debate so calls me.

After four years of Maine came Massachusetts, where we lived for three years in the town of which the Autocrat wrote that its citizens think we are all part of one tremendous Hull. Here horizons broadened. Our first son was born. I went to college. And on the day before Lincoln's Birthday in 1918 I took the oath and became an American citizen.

During those days in Hull we were at war. In the week after the declaration John Waterhouse and I went into Boston to enlist. We made our applications at a tent on Boston Common. We were both rejected, I because of my dependents and John because he was too short. Even on that solemn day the authentic American note broke into our journey. In the crowded street car John sat on my knee in fun, and the inevitable humorist made his crack about our being Mutt and Jeff.

In the spring of 1919 a hot fight for Selectman set Hull by the ears. One of the candidates was the man who had been the perennial Moderator of the Town Meeting. This left that office open. I have always counted it one of the best experiences of my life that all factions joined to

ask me to fill the place. Thus, within a year of my naturalization, I was organically included in the community, accepted as one to be trusted with official place. It did not seem strange then. It still does not. For my neighbors and me, it was the popular endorsement of the official seal.

Today a young man bearing my name is somewhere in the Pacific wearing the uniform of Uncle Sam. He, his brothers, and his sister are my ambition. What on the dock in Portland thirty years ago was faith and dream, in them has become substance and realization. Love of them is one with love of America, and for their sakes I speak honestly the convictions that are mine. They, too, inspire the patriotic pulse, and we together have made our decision to let no prejudice prevail against justice between man and man, nor to cease the struggle until liberty and equality implement true brotherhood among all who call themselves Americans.

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*Well-known lecturer and former President of the University of Newark, Dr. Frank Kingdon is President of the Union for Democratic Action, Chairman of the International Rescue and Relief Committee, and Special Consultant in the Office of Civilian Defense.*

*The illustrations are by Bernadine Custer.*

# I AM AN "ENEMY ALIEN"

HANS LAMM

THE ordinary "enemy alien," I am confident, is neither "enemy" nor "alien" at heart. The trouble is that so many entirely different people—the Japanese and Nazi spy, the long-time resident alien who for some reason has failed to become a citizen, the former German Socialist leader, the non-political Jewish business man, and many more—are all grouped in the one category. Hence I cannot speak for "enemy aliens" in general. But I can try to describe a number of experiences my friends and I have had in recent months.

The other day Dr. Fritz Eldental, an "enemy alien" like myself, had a conference with a U.S. District Attorney to request a permit for a trip to a nearby community. In the course of the interview the District Attorney asked, "How does it happen, Doctor, that you, a refugee, have received German propaganda publications?" It was not difficult for Dr. Eldental to explain that the Nazis had put hundreds of thousands of names on their mailing lists, that he, a student of international affairs, was interested in their output, and that he had been for years recipient also of the publications from the Libraries of Information of practically all the United Nations. The District Attorney was satisfied with the replies, and Dr. Eldental received his travel permit. But he did not stop worrying.

"How can I convince the authorities that I am a Nazi-hater and not a Nazi spy?" he argued. "How can I definitely prove I am loyal to all American institutions and eager to serve this country?"

"Did you register for civilian defense?"

"Yes," he said, "but you know fifth columnists often attempt to penetrate civic and patriotic institutions."

"But you were expatriated many years ago by the Hitler government as an anti-Nazi!"

"Yes," he replied, "but the American authorities could figure this was just a trick by the Nazis to make their spy's infiltration easier."

"But you have never been in touch with Germans or Nazi-sympathizers in this country," I argued.

"True enough, but no intelligent spy would have been, either."

Our argument went on this way. I reminded him of the defense stamps and bonds his family had long been purchasing, of the little American flag pin on his lapel, of his wife's knitting for the Red Cross, and of many other facts which seemed to prove his innocence: and he continued to show me—I must admit rather convincingly—that each of these factors could be interpreted as clever attempts to cover up subversiveness.

Then shortly after Pearl Harbor I entered a school building with a suitcase full of books. To tease me, the janitor, who knew me well, approached as terrifyingly as a Gestapo agent. "Hey, you—you can't come in here without having your suitcase inspected!" I immediately dropped it to show him all my innocent text books. Both he and an American fellow-student broke into loud laughter and declared me to be "absolutely crazy."

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How could I accept his authority to search me without questioning his right.

Theirs was just the reverse of contemporary continental European behavior. It will take a long time for us refugees to relearn that authorities are but human beings, fellows like you and me, apt to make mistakes like you and me, and—and this is the most amazing feature—constantly aware of these facts. In war times especially it would be helpful and encouraging for us “enemy aliens” to learn to believe that one is considered innocent as long as he has not been proven guilty.

Michael Baum’s father had been killed in the Buchenwalde concentration camp, and since the day he learned from a former inmate of the camp how they had tortured him—slowly and with the scientific thoroughness of systematic Teutonic minds—since that day Mike had been changed. He had something of the seriousness we connect with elderly people only. You did not need to ask what he was determined about; you knew he wanted to revenge his father. I had never seen Mike break down, not even when the Gestapo sent his father’s ashes c.o.d. to his home. Then his face had merely frozen into an expression that frightened you. But I saw him weep after Pearl Harbor. He had been at a Navy Recruiting Station and they would not allow him, an “enemy alien,” to volunteer. He came to me and almost screamed: “Do you get that, Hans? I, whose father was one of the first victims of Hitler; I, whose whole existence is wrapped up in a victory of the Allies; I shall not be permitted to contribute to that victory! Does that make sense to you?”

And I think of Mrs. Minnie Lehman’s letter to the Attorney General: “I am no citizen yet and I am afraid I’ll be arrested. I know what a concentration camp means; I’ve been in more than one in Germany.

The only favor I beg from you is: if you are going to send me to a concentration camp, please allow me to take my puppy with me.”

The refugees who have come to these shores since 1933, left their homeland because the new regime hated them and did its best to make their life unbearable. Possibly they still retain pleasant memories of the music and landscape, the schools and cities of Germany. But they learned to hate people, and they fervently hate Hitler and everything he stands for. This is true of all the thousands of haunted human beings who found a new home in the United States. I say this in spite of the fancy story of the Nazi spy who came here disguised as a refugee. With all due respect to Dr. Goebbels’ and Heinrich Himmler’s clever tricks, I deny that anyone can continuously and successfully pretend to be an anti-Nazi refugee, because there are far too many really anti-Nazi recent immigrants in the country to identify such a fake. And it is with satisfaction I read that none of the spies and subversive elements arrested so far can pretend to be a “refugee.” It is important to remember that non-citizens were never admitted to Fritz Kuhn’s German-American Bund.

So far, the “enemy alien” legislation of the United States Government in the present War has been wise and restrained. On the West Coast it may be that more than one loyal anti-Nazi refugee has fallen victim to measures directed mainly toward the large and perhaps potentially dangerous Japanese population. But elsewhere the regulations have not imposed special hardships on us non-citizens, and we have found the authorities sincerely eager to relieve unnecessary pressure whenever the safety of the nation could allow it. And even when a measure has been unpleasant and bothersome—perhaps to the au-

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thorities as much as to us aliens—we have gladly and cheerfully submitted to it, because we felt these times demand sacrifices from everybody. The authorities, too, have been so kindly, so humorous and gentle in their approach, that it is gratifying to deal with them even if one has to wear the stigma and unfortunate label of "enemy alien."

But if so, why the fuss? Why do some of the refugees suffer emotionally under the merely technical classification? The answer lies in the abnormal and sub-human psychological situation in which these people have had to exist for years. Not often, but in some cases, the Nazis actually succeeded in stamping out the feeling of human dignity and worth in the men and women whom they called "racially inferior." There was continuous living under danger and threat; threat by a foe whom one knew one could not conquer by bravery or strength of character. Escaped from humiliation and degradation, from spite and cruelty, the refugee had to readjust to normality, to a world of decency and equality. That is much harder than it sounds. An individual who in a long and painful sequence of experiences in a known environment has lost belief in humanity will have distinct difficulties regaining it in new and very strange surroundings. One phenomenon should be mentioned here; a fellow-refugee called it the "Polycrates complex." Polycrates was the king of antiquity who experienced such a run of fortunate incidents that his friends began to fear the envy of the gods. So, many recent immigrants have had distinct difficulty in accepting good luck and generosity after many years of persecution and humiliation. When the doorbell rings in our homes at night, we anticipate a house-searching, not a Western Union boy singing "Happy Birthday to you!" Some "enemy aliens" have therefore accepted

the new restrictions of their liberties with a half-resigned, half-masochistic attitude: "I told you so." They have never relearned that people will accept them, the strangers, as human beings.

Perhaps some officials employed in the different alien-registration procedures, or who handle their affairs now, have wondered at the submissive attitude of the "enemy aliens," why, for instance, I should drop my suitcase of books in such alarm. Have we not hurried like unthinking sheep stampeding to the slaughter? Of course there was the knowledge it was necessary and inevitable to be registered, as we had been finger-printed a year before; there was the willingness to co-operate and show loyalty at least by not making it difficult for the authorities; but there was a little too much of all of this. It was the 110 per cent eagerness of the hunted man who has had to obey for years—and was whipped just the same.

War inevitably enforces many wholesale measures and in numerous instances deprives the individual of rights one regards as desirable. "Enemy aliens" are willing to serve with others, and to stand any discrimination if it seems necessary for the national interest. But if it is not? If they could better serve by action? Many people have long felt that the loyal refugees who are eager to contribute to a victory of the United Nations should be given a chance.

In the March issue of Free World, in the discussion of "What Is Wrong With American Propaganda?" Freda Kirchwey asked: "Do you think that enough use is made by the Government agencies of those among the refugees who know the psychological character and reactions of their people in order to aid in the formation of the proper type of propaganda? Are we afraid of these aliens in our midst?" And Frank Kingdon answered: "That is a point which is terribly well

taken. Our fear of the decent, democratic refugee has been disgraceful. In view of the fact that this is a political war, we have been completely amateurish in our conducting of the political warfare. We should have a group of these refugees who would sit regularly and listen to the foreign broadcasts, answer to the propaganda, formulating in terms of their own experience. We should have big groups of young refugees who would be trained as political commandos, so that they could fly over Italy or some country and drop leaflets. . . . They are ready to do this; they are not asking for anybody to treat them well and make them fat."

Surely they are ready; they are simply waiting for a chance to show what they can do for the United States. As one "enemy alien" eager to defeat Hitler, I offered my services to WRUL many months ago and never received a definite reply. Are they not allowed to hire "enemy aliens" to broadcast to Germany the truth? The army needs physicians, and refugee doctors are eager to serve. Many similar examples could be cited.

But the trend of development seems to be encouraging. From the very beginning of hostilities, the President and the Attorney General quite strongly warned against discrimination and unfair treatment of aliens. The military authorities on the West Coast seem also to have attempted to employ as much consideration as they deemed advisable.

Most promising are quite recent developments. The Presidential Executive Order of March 20th, providing for exceptions from the alien classification for naturalization purposes, allows loyal "enemy aliens" to prove their allegiance and receive their citizenship papers. Equally significant are the revised Selective Service regulations allowing loyal non-citizens to serve in the armed forces, and the Second War Powers Act permitting aliens

inducted into the armed forces to become citizens without a waiting period, even without first papers.

And for the "enemy aliens" who cannot serve in the Army or Navy, there remains the hope that a reclassification will be performed some time in the near future. On March 23rd, Edward J. Ennis, Director of the Alien Enemy Control Unit of the Department of Justice, wrote me: "The possibility of such a program has, of course, been considered in this Department, but it is not clear that it would be practicable. There are over five times as many alien enemies in New York City alone as there were, for example, in all Great Britain, and to undertake to pass upon each one individually would mean an enormous job." And again on March 26th he wrote: "The question of granting exceptions from the enemy alien classification for the purpose of the alien enemy regulations is being seriously considered at the present time, but no decision as yet has been reached."

The "enemy aliens" in the United States have had a chance to experience the fair-mindedness of the American people; they do not doubt that each responsible man in this great country will avoid any undemocratic injustice if it is possible. We trust we shall be given not only a "square deal," but a real chance—a chance to show with all we have and are that we are neither "enemy" nor "alien," but simply bricks in the bulwark for human rights and freedom.

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*A young social worker in Kansas City, Hans Lamm was a journalist in Germany. He came to America in 1938 and has since done graduate work in the University of Kansas City and in Washington University, St. Louis. He is proud to be one of the anti-Fascists recognized by the Nazis as such by expatriation three years ago.*



# THE ALIEN ENEMY PROGRAM—SO FAR

JAMES ROWE, JR.

IN ANY “progress report” on the government’s alien enemy program since Pearl Harbor, it will be observed that the policies under which the government is operating are still in flux. The patterns are beginning to emerge, but the nation has far to go before they crystallize into routine administration “for the duration.”

In discussing “alien enemies”—those million human beings in America cursed by this unsatisfactory and legalistic description—a basic frame of reference ought to be recognized at the outset.

1. A nation at war safeguards its internal security above all else. Nothing must be allowed to injure that security. To survive long enough to win its war, any State—including the strong democracy which is the United States—must resolve strong suspicions about any and all individuals in its own favor and against those persons.

2. The use of the fifth column as a tactic of total warfare has infinitely complicated the question where civil liberties end and treason begins—for the alien as well as the citizen. Even the most tolerant and watchful members of this community of States (and this includes the American Civil Liberties Union) are aware of the fifth column’s menace. They have watched its operation in Norway and France; they have seen its brilliant technique only too recently in Malaya and Java. They are convinced it exists at home. Gilbert and Sullivan’s liberals and conservatives are of one mind in their proper suspicions, though they are not

agreed whom to suspect. Time-tested and precedent-minded liberals are properly fearful of “witch hunts,” governmental or vigilante; yet in each mind lurks a new and corroding doubt: “*This time these charges may well be true, not just excuses for witch hunting*”—an unpleasant dichotomy for the liberal.

3. Only the very naive will expect to find this troublesome fifth column primarily centered among alien enemies. For one thing, they are too amenable of control: the Constitution is no protection to them in time of war. What we know, Hitler knows. The German mind is thorough; his agents have, of a certainty, examined American legal precedents from the First World War. The evidence is sufficiently impressive that these agents have cultivated more fertile fields for purposes of espionage and sabotage—the naturalized and even native-born citizen. These have the protection of the Bill of Rights and a thorough trial by twelve good men. No matter how well-founded the suspicions of the government, it must stand up in court and prove with provable evidence, subject to the niceties of the law, what is often legally unprovable.

4. The huge mass of German and Italian alien enemies (the Japanese centered on the West Coast are regarded as *sui generis*) are undoubtedly loyal. This is recognized by government and individuals alike. They chose our good earth to live on. We American citizens give them, somewhat unselfconsciously, a high mark for their wise choice, because we like

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America too. But for one reason or another, partly because of executive restrictions or statutory rigidity, partly because of individual fault, they just did not get around to becoming American citizens. They should not now be held up to criticism; for that omission they are paying plenty today.

Nonetheless an unfortunate caveat is necessary. It is easier for the enemy to proselytize among those few who have in some measure retained their devotion to the fatherland. The most convenient point for the enemy to start is the outward sign of omission to become an American citizen. So the enemy has undoubtedly done considerable work among the one million alien enemies.

The acceptance of these criteria leads, in my opinion, only to one conclusion: the control of alien enemies must be left entirely to the Federal government. This is no field for amateurs. Anyone having to deal daily with the multitudinous and complex problems revolving around alien enemies must be tough-minded albeit fair-minded, sometimes turn and turn-about, often at one and the same time. These complexities have the irritating habit of making even the experts seem absurd.

Anyone who has the temerity to ask the American public for a "hands-off" attitude must, I suppose, also be courageous enough to try to prove that the government is performing this duty satisfactorily. Let us examine what it has done thus far.

With the rise of the Axis pressure-diplomacy and the success of the German armed forces throughout the world, it became apparent to the government long before December 7, 1941 that its house should be put in order. The Department of Justice began planning strong preventive programs ready for immediate action on the inevitable day of reckoning.

As the interminable debate over America's foreign policy captured the headlines, planning quietly continued. At least a year before Pearl Harbor the Department began to list possible saboteurs and enemy agents among the German, Italian, and Japanese alien populations. These lists were carefully compiled by Federal Bureau of Investigation agents and submitted for thorough review to a comparatively unknown division, at that time called the Special Defense Unit, whose chief function was the planning of vigorous counter-measures in the event of war.

The Department of Justice was just as surprised as the public by the events of that Sunday afternoon in Hawaii. But it was not unprepared. The powder magazine had been well-stocked, the gun was loaded, the crew well-trained and ready for action. All that remained to be done was a touch of the button. The button was pushed that very Sunday. Attorney General Biddle submitted to the President for his signature a Proclamation providing that Japanese alien enemies deemed dangerous to the public peace or safety were subject to summary apprehension. Similar Proclamations pertaining to German and Italian nationals were issued Monday. The statutory basis for these Proclamations rests on the Act of 1798. Thus the government's policy that in time of war alien enemies are subject to immediate arrest is one of the oldest traditions of this country.

Twenty-four hours later the FBI had arrested more than 1,000 Japanese aliens. By the end of the week 3,000 German, Japanese, and Italian aliens had been apprehended. In the First World War only 63 alien enemies were apprehended the first day, and the end of the first month found considerably less than 1,000 jailed. These figures are used merely to emphasize the thoroughness of preparation during the months preceding the war.



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The figures, however, do not tell just what an alien enemy is. The Act of 1798 defines such a person as an alien, denizen, citizen, or subject of a nation at war with the United States. The term does not mean an enemy who happens to be an alien, but rather an alien who happens to have enemy nationality. It is only a legal term which does no more than describe the nationality of a person; but unfortunately too many Americans and even too many alien enemies themselves are convinced the term's connotations are necessarily restricted to a person who is an alien disloyal to the United States.

As a rule of thumb (subject of course to many necessary exceptions), it has been decided an alien enemy is every person 14 years or over who is now a citizen or subject of Germany, Italy, or Japan, or every person whose last allegiance was to one of these countries. Austrians who were registered as such in the alien registration of 1940, Koreans, and natives of the Dodecanese Islands have been exempted as groups because of the belief their enemy nationality status was imposed on them against their will. This does not apply to an individual Austrian or Korean, however, if that person is suspected of being a dangerous alien enemy.

The next step was the formal creation by the Attorney General of a new division in the Department of Justice called the Alien Enemy Control Unit, charged with supervision of the million alien enemies. It has set up procedures for hearing and reviewing the cases of those apprehended by the FBI. It puts into effect regulations controlling the travel and other conduct of the alien enemy population. Because not only the FBI but also the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the United States Attorneys, and the State, War, and other government departments must perform many functions

relating to alien enemies, it is the function of the Alien Enemy Control Unit to co-ordinate all these activities.

As soon as possible, the Attorney General appointed civilian alien enemy boards in every Federal judicial district to hear the cases of arrested persons. These boards consider the evidence gathered by the FBI and the Immigration Service, interview and cross-examine the affected alien, and then recommend to the Department of Justice what in their opinion should be the ultimate fate of each alien—release, parole, or internment for the duration of the war. More than 100 such boards are now operating in the nation. In districts where there is a large concentration of alien enemy population, such as the Southern District of New York, several have been appointed. Each consists of three or more prominent members of the district. Lawyers, doctors, bankers, businessmen, persons schooled in social work with alien enemy populations, are all well represented.

The recommendations of the boards are forwarded to the Alien Enemy Control Unit, where each case is carefully reviewed. This practice achieves more than a semblance of uniformity on a national scale, thus preventing haphazard application of severe punishment in minor cases, and vice versa. Finally, the Attorney General orders each alien enemy released or paroled or interned depending on his judgment of the facts in each case. Interned aliens are transferred to the custody of the Army.

The single test involved is that no chances can be taken, that any substantive doubts must be resolved in favor of the government. The number of persons apprehended since the beginning of the war exceeds 8,000 at this writing. So far internments have run about 50 per cent of the cases heard; 33 per cent have been placed on parole, and 17 per cent have

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been released. Those paroled must report twice a week to the Immigration and Naturalization Service office in their district; a citizen sponsor is also assigned to each. No one expected all those apprehended were guilty. Apprehension as an alien enemy on suspicion of fifth column connections is not the same process as arrest of a citizen on a criminal charge. Further, in the first few weeks, the government took absolutely no chances on anyone.

The FBI agents have been thoroughly trained for this work. While their training course insists on the scrupulous avoidance of Gestapo tactics, they are also taught not to take chances adversely affecting this country's welfare, which might allow a spy to remain at large or a saboteur to complete his work. A short time spent in custody by a person who has been erroneously suspected—while a definite hardship on the individual—is a small price to pay when weighed against the lives of American workers or the continued operation of plants supplying American soldiers. The purpose of the civilian hearing boards is to weigh considerations of the internal security of the nation against evidence pointing to suspicious activities of individuals. If any injustices are done, the technique exists specifically to remedy them as soon as possible, while at the same time temporary detention safeguards the nation.

The other main phase of the government's program is concerned with the general control of the alien enemy population. Since the war every alien enemy has been required to complete a detailed life questionnaire as the basis for a certificate of identification which bears his photograph and fingerprints. He must carry this at all times. If he travels outside the community where he lives (except when commuting to work), he must give complete information about the na-

ture and destination of his trip and carry with him a form indicating this information has been received by the United States Attorney. Alien enemies cannot make airplane trips and cannot change their place of residence without the permission of the United States Attorney.

Beside the travel regulations, all alien enemies have been forced to surrender radio transmitters, short-wave radio receiving sets, cameras, firearms, and certain other dangerous articles. These regulations are rigorously enforced. The FBI has conducted thousands of searches and has arrested many alien enemies for possessing prohibited articles. The penalty for possessing these is severe, and includes internment for the duration of the war.

This, then, is a summary of the government's alien enemy program so far. It has, on the whole, worked satisfactorily. To be sure, the policies which are being followed have provoked considerable criticism. A large, somewhat vociferous group insists the Department of Justice is "coddling" obvious enemies of the nation. A numerically smaller group believes, on the other hand, that the government has been too ruthless in its surveillance of a large number of persons who happen not to be American citizens and who, through the accident of birth, are becoming innocent victims of national vengeance against our enemies. This was expected by government administrators; there is nothing noteworthy in the complaints except for the present disinterest in the problem by the great majority of American citizens. If history is here a logical guide, such disinterest will not long continue.

The problem of the alien enemy has, so far, been met. The dangerous ones are where they should be; the others have been subjected to irritating but, I think, not too confining restrictions on their normal lives. The government administrator cannot forget his primary duty to

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secure the national safety, yet must not forget it is unnecessary to sacrifice the substance of democracy while his countrymen battle in foreign lands to preserve its form.

Several major questions of policy lie ahead. They have not yet been decided and, at this point, only their general nature can be indicated.

Under the original Proclamation of the President, the Attorney General was given power to evacuate alien enemies from critical military areas. This was undertaken in January on the West Coast, but it was soon apparent that protection of military installations and strategic areas is primarily a military matter. From the point of view of adequate protection, it does not matter what nationality any or all persons happen to have. The disloyal American citizen is just as dangerous as the disloyal alien. It matters little to the Army whether a saboteur, German or Italian or American, is adequately punished for destroying a vital transportation bridge. The Army wants the bridge. It was determined, therefore, that the power of exclusion from any strategic military area must apply against any or all persons, irrespective of citizenship. This sweeping power, it seems clear, should properly be an exercise of military power based wholly on military reasons. Therefore the Attorney General, whose control under the President's Proclamation legally extended only to alien enemies, and the Secretary of War requested the President to transfer authority to designate such areas from the Department of Justice to the War Department. This was done by Executive Order No. 9066, February 19, 1942. The order has already been enforced on the West Coast and, at this writing, is about to be extended to the East Coast. To insure that the economic and social problems created by evacuations were intelli-

gently met by government officials skilled and experienced in migratory and other social upheavals, the President created by Executive Order No. 9102 of March 18, 1942, the War Relocation Authority.

The future, then, holds the need of integrated co-operation between the War Department and the Department of Justice in working out pragmatically the relationship of alien enemies, who happen to live on either coast of the United States, to military necessity. It will require the utmost in whatever poise and vision is possessed by both Departments to balance military necessities against the possibility of disaffecting the minds of the great majority of loyal alien enemies. Much will depend on them; their performance over the past five months is a cheering token for future action.

Another pressing matter of policy is whether classes of alien enemies, or individual alien enemies, should be exempted from government restrictions. Many of the protests the government receives are from persons and groups who quite understandably believe the legalistic term "alien enemy" is in some way a badge of disloyalty. There have, for example, been many suggestions that "loyalty boards," similar in form to the hearing boards, be set up to determine the loyalty of each alien. When one remembers Thomas Mann is today an alien enemy and possibly subject to evacuation from the West Coast shoreline, this exemption program has understandable plausibility.

It has often been suggested that political refugees from Hitler's reign of terror be exempted as a class or, at least, be given the opportunity as individuals to prove their activities against the Axis. Yet there are disinterested arguments against such exemptions. They would, for instance, be unpopular with such groups as the Italian alien enemies who have lived here most of their lives but who, for one reason or

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another, have neglected naturalization. This is often true of women born in Italy, who traditionally are interested only in their homes and hearths. When the English experience is cited as aptly analogous, its American exponents are prone to emphasize the similarities and neglect the differences. England had only 80,000 alien enemies; there are five times that many in New York City alone.

There are also almost insuperable administrative difficulties. It would take years to hold individual hearings. Experience has shown such hearings to be valueless without the intensive investigations which precede the alien enemy hearing board proceedings. Only specially trained investigators of the FBI can be relied upon to do this work. They are already overburdened with tasks much more immediately vital to the nation's security. And to provide another adequate staff of comparably skilled investigators would take years of training.

The "loyalty board" technique might also not be conclusive. The trained espionage agent or saboteur is probably sufficiently skillful to manufacture evidence of his loyalty convincing enough to delude the board into giving him a loyalty certificate. This would be a sufficient badge later to throw off doubts or suspicions which might lead to his ulti-

mate exposure. And the loyal alien, on the other hand, might not because of lack of education or understanding or intelligence be able to marshal in his own behalf sufficient proof of his loyalty. He might place himself in a position worse than that he enjoys today and thereafter be stigmatized as not loyal.

There is also the great danger of exempting groups as groups; within each are undoubtedly dangerous and disloyal individuals who use them as protective cloaks for their activities.

At any rate, the problem is now under exhaustive study by the government agencies concerned.

As in so many other fields, "total war" has brought bitterly complex problems to the individuals who comprise the alien enemy population. Those in the government charged with the responsibility of controlling them are attempting to meet these problems with intelligence and disinterest, with the single goal of serving the nation best. Where the solutions will lead us as a nation cannot yet be foreseen. But today we can at least say we are beginning to chart the way that lies ahead.

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*James Rowe, Jr., widely experienced in many government departments and Administrative Assistant to the President from July 1939 to December 1941, is now the Assistant to the Attorney General.*

## AMERICAN SOLDIERS CAN EAT BLACK BREAD

EDWARD F. HASKELL

BRUCE Halley tried to open a window for air, but Petko's servant girl wouldn't let him. Petko might catch cold. Disgustedly the small American untied the package of American magazines friends back home had sent to his father stationed here in Bulgaria. But when he spread them carefully on the floor, the girl picked them up and said, "Sit at the table. Petko mustn't get dirty." Then she went out.

Petko was the son of Colonel Radkoff, Commandant of Tsarevo, and Bruce thought he would be thrilled at the pictures in the American magazines just as Mustafa, his Gypsy friend, had been.

But "This is for the Americans' gums that bleed," Petko rehearsed a few minutes later. "And this is for your teeth that fall out; and this is for your bad breaths; and this is for the bad taste in your mouths; and this is for your headaches; and this is for your stomach aches! My God! It is a good thing I am not an American! And what is this?"

Bruce looked surlily at the page. "For keeping hair from falling out," he grunted.

"Ha, ha, ha! Your hair falls out too! And what is that? Go on, don't lie!"

"That's for keeping from having fallen arches."

"Fallen arches? What's that?"

"What's that! What's that! What's that!" Bruce Halley's gray eyes snapped indignantly. "You just shout. But you don't know anything! Look at this picture. See how strong this American is. A real bear wrestler! As strong as any Bulgar!

And he has lots of hair and teeth and everything!"

"Strong?" Petko wrinkled his delicate nose. Contemptuously he pretended to spit on the floor. "Just see what he eats! See, on this page? Bread, white as snow. Look here and here! All kinds of hams and preserves and chocolates. Okh, okh! He eats like a sick person, not like our healthy Bulgarian peasants."

The ten-year old American snatched the magazines away, glaring and panting and trying to think what to say. "How could he eat like a peasant when there isn't any peasant food in America? Look! It's all different food!"

"Of course it's different!" crowed Petko. "There can't be food like ours, because Americans couldn't eat it. That's why! If American soldiers had nothing to eat but black bread and white beans, like our soldiers, they would squat down on the spot and die by themselves. Their teeth and eyes and hair and everything would fall out." He howled with delight at his discovery. "The enemy wouldn't have to shoot at them. The spoiled Americans would drop apart by themselves!"

"Idiot!" Bruce shrieked, throwing the magazines at Petko's head. "Liar! Donkey!" He grabbed Petko around the neck and dragged him yowling to the floor. "I'll break your teeth so you can't lie any more! I'll give you the biggest headache you ever had. An American headache!"

With a bang, the door exploded Colonel Radkoff headlong into the room. After

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him came Mr. and Mrs. Halley and Bruce's sister, Eleonora. Petko's shrieks were turning into rasping gurgles. The red-faced Colonel wrenched Bruce's arms apart and flung him half way across the room.

Petko wailed inconsolably.

Mr. Halley could see that the Colonel had been insulted to the death. A guest at the Commandant's house, attacking his own son!

"Why did you do this, Bruce?" he demanded in English. "Why have you put me to shame?"

Bruce stared angrily at the floor and said nothing. Mr. Halley seized him by the shoulder, dragged him to the door and down the stairs.

Eleonora's hands clasped each other tightly. She started after them. But she was already too late. A series of sharp, measured whacks sounded loudly and—for Petko and his father—consoling through the house.

Some time later the small boy with the gray eyes and high forehead trudged glumly into the library of his own home. His eyes brightened a little as they caught sight of Eleonora on the couch. He closed the door solemnly and began to untie the string and put the magazines back into the rack.

"Well, Bruce?" she said.

He turned to her defiantly. "Well!"

"I was surprised to see you hurt a little boy like that."

"Huh!" Bruce muttered a blood-curdling Bulgarian oath, not knowing she understood it. "Of course I did. And I'll hit him with my *prashka*—sling—if he ever says such things again! Just because he's the Commandant's son doesn't mean he can say such things about America. I bet the American soldiers are so strong they could eat bread as black as a piano. Anyway the West Point cadets could!"

"Don't be silly, Bruce. The West Point cadets are used to better food than even Bulgarian generals get. But what do you care what he says about America? You can hardly even remember America."

"Is that so! I can hardly remember America! I had a kiddie car in America, and a coaster wagon. Of course I can remember it! There was a boy there named Dickie Pulavsky, with glasses."

"But why should you beat a boy for saying things against a kiddie car and a coaster wagon and Dickie Pulavsky? You have just as nice things here! A sling and sheep dogs and buffaloes; and when there is no war, even a horse. And there are Gypsies here, and peasants, and the barracks. You know Bulgarian better than English. You know Bulgarian history better than American history. Don't you love Bulgaria? Wouldn't you die for Macedonia?"

"Of course! But that's different! I'm not a Bulgar, am I? I'm an American, aren't I? Daddy said he'd let me go to college in America, and play football and everything, didn't he? Buffaloes and barracks! They're just *prosta rabota*—simple things."

"But what would you do in America if some boy came to you and said Bulgaria was an uncivilized country—an awful place?"

"I'd take a stone and break his mouth! Only—" he looked apologetic—"of course an American boy wouldn't tell such lies."

"But why would you hit him if he did? You're not a Bulgar. You're an American."

"I don't care! I don't care what I am. You just don't understand. The Germans say I'm a rude American. They all call me pro-English and hate me even when I like them." His voice wavered. "All the boys do, and the Commandant and—even the Bulgarian soldiers at the *kasarmi*. And Daddy beats me! And the English



prisoners at the 'Express,' they—they just laugh." He could hardly go on. "Only Mustafa is my friend. And they beat him because he's a Gypsy. The boys beat him with leather belts!" His head bent over the magazines. His lip was trembling.

Eleonora put her arm around his shoulder. But he continued to kneel, eyes held rigidly on the magazines. He put his arm up and tried suddenly to hide his eyes. With a choking wail he buried his face in her lap.

Eleonora's hand rose instinctively to stroke his head but sank quietly onto his shoulder. "Bruce," she said, "there is a good American way to find out whether Petko was wrong or right."

His gray eyes peered through the tears.

"Yes, Bruce, you can prove who is right in a really American way. You can make an experiment. Go and get lots of black peasant bread, and you and Petko eat the same amount. Then you'll see quite clearly who is tougher."

Bruce stared at her. "But—but—but what if I got sick and Petko didn't?"

"Well, then you'd surely have to admit that right now there is one American who isn't as tough as one Bulgar. Wouldn't you?"

"Huh! Tougher? That donkey?" He stood up glaring. "I'll bet you I can eat blacker bread—the blackest bread that anybody ever—"

Bruce ran over the solid old cobblestones toward the Turkish mosque, shimmering in the purplish Bulgarian afternoon light. He panted past the usual queue of drowsy two-horse carriages toward the ever-present ragged row of boot-blacks lounging along the far side of the square.

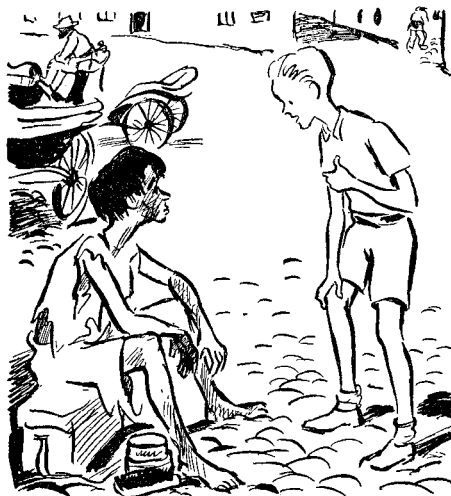
"Hey, Mustafa!" he shouted.

All he could see clearly of Mustafa was a huge grin. The rest of him was

so black Bruce barely noticed the shoe polish streaked across his nose. Knees, elbows, shoulders, and half of the rest of his body stuck out from his clothes. And it was all black. Mustafa went swimming sometimes, but he absolutely never washed.

"Give bread, Mustafa!"

The undergrown boy laughed, but too loudly. He looked a little hurt. "Why



do you make such jokes, Bruce? How could I give bread to you?"

Bruce stared at him.

"All day I have not eaten," Mustafa grinned. "For supper I have only this." From among his rags he produced a pitch-black little crust, a possession too precious to keep in his shoe-shine box, exposed to the tricky fingers of his neighbors.

"Yes, but at home?" Bruce faltered.

"If I don't bring them at least a little loaf, they'll beat me. The mud has dried and there is no dust yet: there are no customers. I can't go home."

Bruce pondered. "But why don't you beg?"

"Beg? Do you know with what whips they beat you at the police station?"

"Beat!" Bruce cried indignantly. "With whips? I'd like to see them beat me!"

Mustafa grinned at this magnificent bravery. "You they would not beat, Bruce. They're scared of your father and of America. You they would let beg in peace, as much as you like."

"*Khaidé*, then! Let's both go begging! We'll go together. I won't let them even touch you!"

The water buffaloes paced ponderously, swaying their horns from side to side. They moved so slowly they seemed to be sleep-walking. They drew the softly creaking village cart toward the outskirts of Tsarevo. The mayor of Konchentsi, sitting on the straw-covered floor of the cart, his eyes on the boys, stroked his huge mustache amusedly.

"Give bread, Uncle!" moaned Mustafa in the conventional Gypsy way. "I'm very hungry!"

"But why should I give you a whole loaf?" said the mayor, ignoring Mustafa and speaking only to Bruce. "A loaf! Have you gone crazy? Enough to feed a whole family two days! Do you take me for a baker?"

"But Uncle!" Bruce shouted patiently, plodding along beside the cart. "We must have a loaf! The little Gypsy wants to work, but there is no work. He's hungry, but his father will beat him if he doesn't bring home at least a little loaf. And I need half of the big loaf for the experiment, as I told you."

"Give, Uncle, give!" Mustafa interposed monotonously.

Meditatively the mayor whacked the off buffalo with his goad. "What funny sort of animal is this 'experiment,' boy? Why does it eat only village bread? Why can't it eat other bread?"

"It's not an animal, Uncle. Why can't you understand?" For another block or two the boys tagged alongside the cart, while Bruce told his story over again from the beginning.

The peasant jogged in silence for a time. "Come!" he said at last. "Come here with me, children. Sit in the wagon that I may tell you how this whole business stands. . . ."

"Yes, this way it is good. Now, listen to what I tell you, little American. And you, Gypsy, be still or I'll beat you!"

"This boy, Petko Radkoff, he has never eaten a piece of black village bread in his whole life. He eats white bread, just the same as you. This Colonel Radkoff, his father, he steals and requisitions white flour as much as he likes because he's Commandant. He sells to his rich friends and to the German officers. He's a war profiteer! Tell him I said so!" The mayor spat angrily into the street. "It is a scandal known to all the villages in the district of Tsarevo. That is the reason you have white bread at home



and have to beg black bread from me, little American!

"And who are these American soldiers who can't eat blacker bread than Petko Radkoff? Ya! Who are they? Silly little boy! They are people from our own village. That is where they come from. I myself have two sons and three nephews right now in America. And, on top of



that, they are soldiers in the American army."

Bruce's eyes grew big.

"If I lie," said the peasant, "may God kill me on the spot! And how many other Bulgars there are in the American army, only God knows. Petko says American soldiers can't eat blacker bread than he!" Again the peasant spat into the street. "Tell Petko Radkoff that American soldiers hunger for black bread. But there isn't any! Their teeth ache and their hair falls out because there is no good black bread in America!"

He picked up the flat, wagon-wheel sized loaf. "There, look! There, boy, is the foundation of the strength and bravery of the Bulgarian soldier, the Russian soldier, and the Serbian soldier, too! And of these, the American generals may well be glad to have thousands."

"Uncle," said Mustafa, "please give! I'm too hungry!"

"Little Gypsy, why don't you keep still?" The mayor stroked his mustache thoughtfully. "Little American, say: did you understand well what I told you?"

"I understand well, Uncle."

"You understand that my boys and you are Americans together. But Petko and the Commandant, who are they? I do not admit that they are Bulgars!" He spat clear across the street. "That's who they are! We'll clean them out like dust some day!"

He stroked his handle-bar mustache again. "Did you understand well?"

"Well! I understand very well!"

"Good. Then for the experiment I will give half a loaf to you. But to the little Gypsy, because he doesn't mind what I tell him and chatters so much, I give not even a crumb!"

The mayor avoided Mustafa's eyes. He pulled a dagger from his thirty-foot red

cloth belt and sliced the great loaf smoothly in half.

Bruce glanced anxiously at Mustafa. Big tears made strange gray lines through the grime on his thin cheeks.

"Here!" said the villager. "Take it, little American, and go home! Good-bye."

Bruce took the heavy half-moon in both hands. The villager pulled his sheepskin cap down over his eyes decisively and turned away.

Hesitantly the boy touched him on the shoulder. "But Uncle, I don't need the experiment any more now."

"Deea!" shouted the peasant, goading his somnambulant buffaloes.

Bruce looked toward Mustafa. He was crouching on the tail of the wagon, his head buried in his arms. "Good-bye, Uncle!" said Bruce. As they slipped off at the rear of the cart, he added in the approved beggars' manner, "May God reward you!"

The mayor of Konchentsi sat for some time staring straight ahead, past the swaying horns. Then he turned slyly.

Sure enough, the little American had given the bread to the Gypsy. The shoe-shine box swung on the American's shoulder. The Gypsy was carrying the bread under his arm, tearing off chunks and stuffing them into his mouth as he went.

The peasant grinned and wagged his shaggy head. "In truth, the little American understands very well!"

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*Edward F. Haskell, author of the novel Lance, is now at the University of Chicago carrying on a course of scientific study for which the University has specially created its Inter-Divisional Committee on Unified Science.*

*Kurt Werth is the illustrator.*

## SOLDIER IN THE SOUTH

FRED D. WIECK

IN THE fall of 1941 the Army unit to which I belong went South to the Carolinas to take part in the last peace-time maneuvers. It was my first trip South. And since America is my country not by birth but by comparatively recent adoption, I went with a curiosity particularly tense.

I had heard much about the South, of course. The South, it seemed, was the center of unselfish hospitality—and the home of Scarlett O'Haras; a hotbed of exploitation—and engagingly funny; "the settlement on the other side of the tracks that smells so bad every time the wind turns"—and the refuge of the fine art of living. The newspapers called it simply Our Number One Economic Problem, and that was that.

On the truck ride down, I took stock of the information I had, and decided to start from scratch.

Our convoy neared its destination, a former ccc camp in North Carolina. On the signs along the highway, tobacco products came alive: Winston-Salem, Durham, Raleigh. Pine trees closed in on the smooth tar-black strip of road between white sand shoulders. We passed Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Pine Bluff. Then unexpectedly the truck turned off the road and sank into a cloud of dust. High grass and pine saplings scraped against its bottom. We stopped. We had reached base camp.

The first weeks were devoted to building. We converted the weedy wilderness into a tent city with straight, saw-dust

covered streets; a hard road for the trucks that kept coming and going; garbage dumps, showers, play courts. Then, before the simulated warfare, we were given time to go exploring.

The clearing was surrounded on all sides by pine woods, without a landmark. I walked off straight in the direction I happened to face.

The forest was loosely set, with high grass growing in tufts. Underfoot was a gossamer carpet of thin trembling grass with silvery hair, concealing the sand without keeping it from puffing dust under each step. The pine trees were fire-blackened to a height of ten feet. Above the charred line their dark green needles, eight to ten inches long and growing in all directions from their center-bud, formed perfect globes that quivered in the warm updraft. Under the older trees lay pine cones almost tropical in the extravagance of their size; but the trees themselves had an air of northern climates, their colors somber, their shapes sparse. It was hot and very quiet. The pale blue of the sky, unchanged for weeks, was very far. For miles I saw no birds.

After two hours of this the forest broke, and I came upon a cotton field.

The plants were no higher than my knees—scrawny, their leaves dark and dusty. The few open blossoms were snowy white and silky to the touch. Between the long and irregular rows of plants the soil showed parched and brittle. More silent pine woods framed the field. Silence and solitude sat over it like a cheese-bell.

## SOLDIER IN THE SOUTH

Beyond the field, hardly visible against the trees, stood the farm house—a shack, built on the general plan of the houses along the highway: a large covered porch, with living quarters tacked onto it in an afterthought, unpainted and weather-blackened. But unlike them, it had no Hi-Li or Royal Cola sign to protect its weatherside.

In the shadow of a chinaberry tree by the well, stood the farmer in dark overalls. He looked at me through the runnels of the turkey ladder that led up into the



tree's branches. He watched without motion or expression until I had passed. I wanted to talk to him, but under the heat, the silence, and the dust I could not find the courage to break into the isolation of his brooding blue eyes.

I walked on in a deep, double sand-track—his "road." It wandered through the silent woods, dipping into the dried-up bed of a creek, heaving and slumping camel-like over hills and ditches. I followed it for another hour before reaching the paved road. . . .

This was the first of many walks. I went in a different direction each time. Once I came upon a little swamp, full of the sunbleached skeletons of dead and fallen trees. Water-oaks and goldenrod stood around the water. But on all these hikes I met the same landscape—forest, dust, silence, and loneliness. There were a few more shacks, just as haphazard and isolated as the first; as if the people that built them had come across the woods aimlessly, much like myself, and settled wherever fatigue overtook them.

For a while, this landscape told me nothing. I saw only its objects, and they seemed sad and desolate. Then it began to grow on me, and afterward, as I stopped looking about with eyes haughty in the memory of the Manhattan sky-line or the rolling forests of Pennsylvania or the sap-dripping black dirt of Minnesota—then the pines and sand of North Carolina began to let me share in their fascination, to tell me something about their people, to tell me that if you live in your own neck of these woods, there is around you a belt of solitude miles and miles wide. For miles and miles, the country is your own. It may be poor; but it is yours—alone. And if you are jealous of your own and of your self, as jealous and as stubborn in your jealousy as were the Pilgrim Fathers, then this virtue of your home being *non tacta* will outshine all its shortcomings.

Then, later, I met the people of this landscape. They were friendly and generous, blond and blue-eyed, with names like West and Weaver and Lucketts and Cooper, and one O'Donnell. Even the

poorest was hospitable and open-handed to us soldiers on maneuvers, and with fifty soldiers to every civilian and the country at peace, that was no mean accomplishment.

For a number of days and nights, I stood guard on a lonely road junction, taking turns with Adam Bolesta, a young soldier of Polish extraction from the Pennsylvania mining district. Not a day went by we did not get milk or cake or cookies or something-or-other good from a miserable little farm a mile off the road. When the nights were cold, the eight-year-old boy Lodell West would come out of the dark with a bottle of hot coffee. If we wanted to go to town, it never took longer than ten minutes to flag a ride. And in town, there were hot showers for us soldiers, game rooms, writing and reading rooms, and innumerable parties and dances and dinners and get-togethers. Nobody seemed to spare effort or money or time to make us enjoy ourselves.

We never felt quite at home, however, because we weren't. The natives never forgot they were dealing with Northerners. Their slow friendly smiles and slow friendly words were sincere—no room for doubt. But behind them was a reserve, stubborn and deep and ever-present, almost fanatical; a reserve in which there could seemingly be no compromise, no bargaining, no change of any kind. We were and remained strangers, from a different part of the country—a different part of the world: we were celebrated like, say, distinguished Chinese.

Mr. Weaver put it into words. He was a large, distinguished looking gentleman, driving a sleek shiny Packard. He picked us up, Eddie and me, on the highway where we were hitching a ride to town one night. His business, it turned out, was quarrying the North Carolina sand, or rather just scooping it up, and selling it as is to contractors for the making of

cement. It was a good business, and Mr. Weaver had no quarrel with the world. He was extremely obliging and insisted on showing us the countryside within a radius of fifty miles. He was entertaining and friendly and pleasant. And then, quite incidentally, he said, "I feel that we down here must be nice to you Yankee boys. Because, if worst comes to worst and war breaks out, why you wouldn't just be fighting for your own homes up in New York and New Jersey—you'd be fighting for us folks down here, too."

I confess that I was flattered, being called a "Yankee boy." But Eddie and I exchanged a glance. We would have liked Mr. Weaver to believe that, whatever we two or any other "Yankee boy" in the Army might do for him and his folks, it would not be done just as an inevitable by-product of defending our own homes up North, but done wholeheartedly: because he and we are one, precisely the thing this war is all about.

I remembered an experience I'd had in France some time ago. A Breton merchant in Quimper said to me at what I believe was the four-hundredth anniversary of Brittany's union with France: "Voilà—four hundred years that we have lost our freedom to France." There was an audible lump in his throat, and he averted his eyes to hide the tears he did not shed. Yet he no longer spoke Breton. His livelihood was in France. France gave him as much, if not more, freedom than any man had, and a share in her prosperity and spirit, to boot. Unless he was dreaming of being another Tarzan, beyond all bonds and privileges of society, he had at the time the best life he could ask for. Yet he chose to bemoan the memory of some condition which he called pompously his "lost freedom."

At times I had the feeling a similar memory of a genteel carefree past was haunting the Southerners I met. While in

the eyes of the world and in the eyes of many of us, America stands as the nation that has achieved the most consistent growth, the most consistent development forward, many men I met in the Carolinas stubbornly clung only to the memory of a past.

Outside the city limits on top of a little hill stood a small meeting hall with a church bell over its entrance. Singing and stamping sounded from within.

The inside was one large room, without ceiling under the roof. Four bare electric bulbs hanging by their wires illuminated each its own little universe of flies, gnats, and moths.

A barefooted little girl ran up to me and handed me a songbook, *Gems of Devotion*, containing "Super Specials, with Soul Appeal, for All Religious Services." The book was printed in Tennessee, at twenty-five cents a copy, sixteen dollars per hundred. The fly leaf showed five photographs with the legend: "E. R. Winsett, publisher, and present family (Former family: Three deceased, rest married)."

Some fifty people were in the audience, another ten or twelve on a platform to the far right. They were singing songs with repetitious words, and melodies with the Gene Autry lilt and rhythm. Children played quietly on the floor between the benches. A soldier in the third row was exchanging slips of paper and whispered remarks with two girls in flimsy cotton prints.

After a while the singing was over. The preacher got up, a tall man of about fifty, in a frazzled shirt; perspiration-wet hair stuck to his forehead. He started out in a low even voice. The audience remained listless. Gradually his tone became singing; his sentences fell into rhythm. The audience stiffened. He talked about the human soul, the immeasurably precious

human soul. His voice grew hoarse and louder and louder; he sang out his words in short sharp rhythmic groups. He paced the floor, stamped the ground, beat the air with his arms. The sermon rose in rapture; the audience throbbed with its beat. They moaned. They stamped. They clapped their hands, and answered: "Yeah man!" "Ain't it the truth!" "Hallelujah!" A woman shrieked.

The tom-tom rhythm made my heart rock faster. Abruptly, the preacher sat down; someone made the rounds with a basket, and the audience, panting, dropped in pennies and nickels which would eventually buy the preacher a new shirt. A woman collected her children and left. The singing began once more. . . .

This was my first "jubilee revival shout." I was fascinated. I watched for revival announcements and went when I had the chance. I witnessed foot-washings and the saving of souls. Some meetings rose to a finale of ecstatic dancing in which the smallest children took part.

All these revivals were attended by white people only, blond and blue-eyed people with names like Weaver and Webster and Lucketts and West. They worshipped in the Negro manner, they danced in the Negro manner, and while their songs were not the melancholy or exultant spirituals that tell stories, but inspirational matter of the "A little talk with Jesus makes it right" type, they had the Negro beat in their tunes.

I felt I had come near the source of a large part of American music. I realized whence the amazing perfection of American popular dancing comes—a skill of self-expression on the public dance floor unknown to any of the European nations that have contributed to America. I was thrilled.

And it is still difficult for me to understand why these Negro contributions are not recognized and credited. The Span-



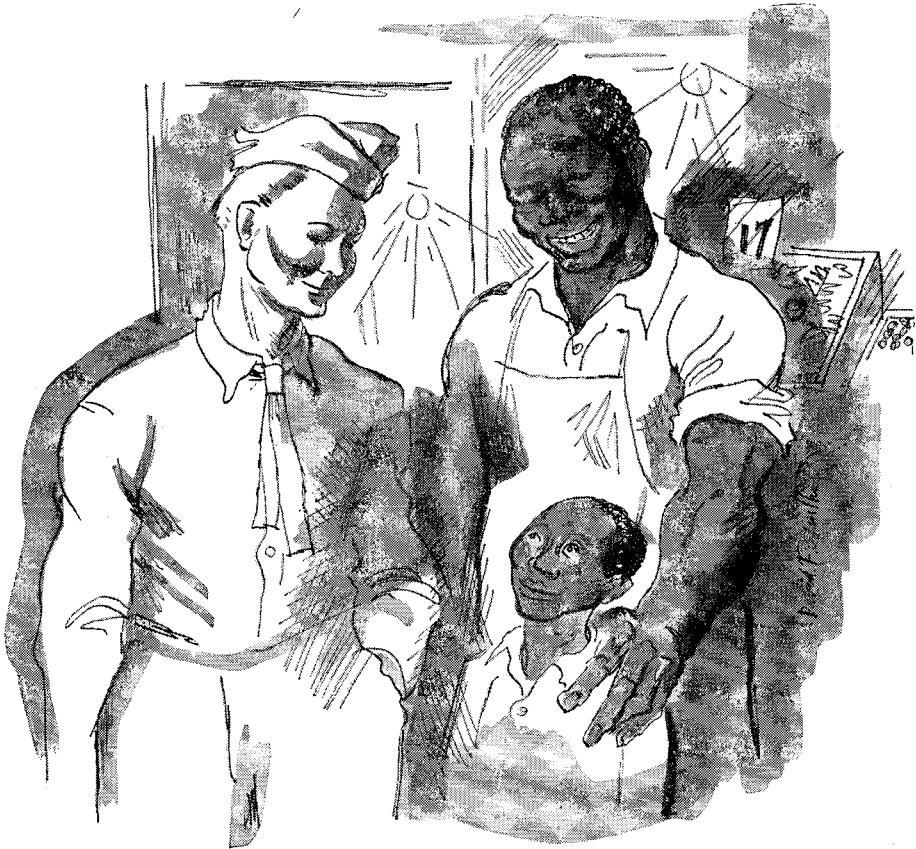
## COMMON GROUND

iards are pleased and proud of the gypsy elements in their national music and dancing—why not America or southern America of its indebtedness to the Negro? But the Southerners I met surrounded every Negro within their reach with a fence of barbed contempt, and looked upon the Yankee who was responsible for abolishing slavery legally with deepest distrust.

The Old South lay in a belt around the three-block, one-street business center of

settlement of workers living in cheap little company bungalows. Wages were 37 1/2 cents per hour, or \$18 for a 48-hour week. A mill foreman complained to me he could not get enough help for his three-shift defense order boom. Not even Negroes? No. He shook his head and made a pinched face. "Niggers doesn't fare too hot around here." He employed them only in the loading end.

On my many wanderings, I suddenly realized, I had seen very few Negroes. There had been a colored family in that



Rockingham which I came to know well—in amazingly magnificent private residences, shaded by the huge old trees of their beautiful parks. But beyond them was another circle around the town: the thirteen cotton mills, each with its own

lonely road stand where I stopped one night for a soda. They had come out of the dark from nowhere, seven or eight of them, and slunk into the store. Tall and slender, their ease of motion and grace of body had exalted the shabby clothing that

covered them. They had been barefoot and moved noiselessly. They had also been mute. A man of the group had asked for three cans of beans while the rest of them stood in silence, the children tightly holding each others' hands or the fold of Mother's skirt, while gazing at the dazzling displays of penny candy.

I tried to talk to them. They returned my advances with a silent look from beneath lowered eyebrows, their chins drawn in. When they had gone down the road in the still night, I heard how, once away from the roadstand, they began to talk among themselves and laugh and joke in soft rich voices.

One night in Aberdeen, North Carolina, I entered the wrong door in a restaurant and found myself in the scullery. Along the steaming, greasy sinks, three colored railroad men sat on stools before a dilapidated counter, waited on by the colored dishwasher.

But on the bright streets of Rockingham or Aberdeen or Sanford or Raeford or Hamlet or Burlington, there were hardly any colored passers-by.

I sought and found, in Rockingham, the section of town called here and elsewhere Niggertown. It was one street along the city dumps and the railroad tracks. The houses were wooden three-story structures held together with safety pins and teeming with people. Every window was dimly lit; people were leaning out. Negro soldiers with their girls were on the street and on the front porches. A stout woman with a laundry basket balanced on her head came up the slope from the tracks with the unerring step of a panther. Children chased each other, ignoring their mothers calling to them across the street.

My approach stopped all activity and conversation, as if a film had been arrested in the midst of high action. They looked at the ground, waiting for me to pass.

At the tail-end of Niggertown, a colored

grocer stood proudly in front of his store. I could ask him for directions. His three-year-old boy had as yet no scruples against playing with me, and I even struck up a conversation. Of sorts; for everything he said was softly polite, absolutely noncommittal.

At the risk of being tactless I pressed for information. How are you living around here? Why do I not see more Negroes in town? His eyes met mine: "We colored people just naturally keep away from you folks." He said it without regret, without rancor, and without forgiveness.

And then the little incidentals began adding up: the legend on the back of movie tickets—"The management may direct the holder of this ticket where to sit"; the legend over the washrooms of the important railroad junction in Hamlet, North Carolina: "WHITE MEN" and "LADIES." Just "Ladies"—no color mentioned.

Of course I don't know half the problem—if there be one. But I do know that from fifty to eighty per cent of the populations of the South American republics allied with us in the fight against fascism are not members of the white race. Neither are great sections of the United Nations. It will not do for them to say to us: "We just naturally keep away from you folks!" It will not do—and the danger is there. Fascist radio propaganda has "dwelt lovingly" on the latest Detroit demonstrations against the Negro in special broadcasts to South America and India. And I have seen it demonstrated in Germany that discrimination works both ways, infallibly—and has a trick of turning its cutting edge against him who believes himself the master.

Recently I met a well-known Negro sculptor. In the course of conversation he said: "I often envy you immigrants, for the way you feel about America. But you see, to you this country really gives free-

## COMMON GROUND

dom, and the right to be your brother's equal—while I who was born here have never known such a condition. I have always been 'colored'."

I thought, for some years, that in leaving my native Germany I had also left behind my share of responsibility for the dismal failure of the German people, that I had achieved the bliss of a new-born baby by entering the promised land. During those years I would not have been willing to admit that America was anything short of utter perfection.

It was a comfortable conviction.

It was also, I realize today, an absolutely stagnant one. I have learned that what by virtue of contrast appeared to me a state of perfection is not the absence of faults, but the incessant effort toward their correction. America has something more dynamic than perfection: it has the vision of a freedom to be achieved. I believe the vision is as alive in the South as in the North. I do not think I have ever set eyes on an individualist less open to compromise than the lonesome farmer in the North Carolina woods.

But the concept of freedom is subject to mutation. In the Army the first reports from Pearl Harbor wiped out, within moments, the various tensions that had existed between selectees and regulars, between career soldiers and spare-time soldiers. There came the realization that we were no longer free to plan our individual lives as we had been doing; that we were committed, all of us together, to work out the salvation of all of us as a unit

—and that this was immensely good, immensely enriching, because it gave us a lease on mankind.

In other words, the concept of freedom had acquired a content of responsibility. We are still our brothers' keepers, whether we like it or not. And the freedom of that self-contained, independent, isolated farmer in the Carolina woods—with all its tradition of the pioneer, of free enterprise, of each man to himself, of survival of the fittest—that freedom is no longer what we need, what we must strive for.

We have to face the issue jointly, each for and with the other. We know what the war is about: the right to do a job, to think what we want to think, to have the art and music and literature we desire, to raise a family—and all this for no greater price than the good old ten commandments, or whatever name we give the basic requirements of social life. But it will take all of us *together*, North and South, colored and white. And perhaps in that "togetherness" some of the old American tensions of color and geography will be forever weakened. They will have to be if the greater after-the-war job is also to be done: the building of a sound life for our children and the guaranteeing of their right to the good sun and the deeper freedom.

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*Corporal Fred D. Wieck contributed another autobiographical sketch, "Foreigner," to the Spring 1941 issue of this magazine.*

*The illustrator is David Fredenthal.*



## WHEN SINGIN' COMES IN

JEAN THOMAS

THE summer term of court in an isolated section of the Kentucky mountains where I was engaged as court stenographer had dragged on for weeks, what with family feuds, "line fight" cases, and a killin' or two. However, the docket was finally cleared and court adjourned "like on a Saturday." And the next day being Sunday I took the advice of Granny Kearey, the aged proprietress of the ramshackle Kearey House, where I boarded at the county seat, and set out in the jolt wagon of friendly neighbors, the Turleys, to take the day with their kin folks on Brushy Fork of Lonesome Creek.

"Woman," said Granny Kearey, "you look plum peekid out of your eyes. Tuckered out, I reckon, and hit's no wonder. You bein' cooped up thar in the court house with them lawyers and a passel of cantankerous and tetcheous witnesses. You a-sottin' down on your writin' book every word that draps from their lips, and you a-givin' ear day arter day to their wrangles. Hit's warryin' you plum down to a bone. You best git out and ketch you a good whiff of fresh air. Git you gone out whar the birds are a-singin' and the laurel's in full blowth," urged the old woman, "way out yonder on Lonesome whar the creek waters is clair as a crystal and a-gurglin' like a song-ballet over snowy white pebbles and sparklin' sands."

Bless you, Granny Kearey wouldn't even let me dry the dishes like I often did—she hustled me right off in the wagon with the Turleys. Ethan and his wife Phronie with the baby sat on the

backless board seat, and I, with the other little Turleys, sat in straight hickory chairs two rows deep in the wagon bed. My portable typewriter and brief case—I never went without them—were at my feet.

We jolted along for many a mile over creek-bed roads, into one rut and out of another. When at last we had reached a quiet ravine at the head of a hollow, I caught the strains of a strange musical instrument drifting on the still summer air. The little Turleys heard it too. And now with the music came the voices of an old man and children. The eyes of the little Turleys danced with glee. They begged their father to stop and "go over to Uncle Abner's."

Knowing the ways of the mountains, I, the stranger from the level land, asked no questions, eager with curiosity though I was.

Then Ethan, jerking a thumb over his shoulder in the direction of the music, said with indifference, "It's old Uncle Abner startin' up the Singin' Gatherin' again, this bein' the second Sunday in June. Hit's nigh same as religion to him. Hark!" His quick hand cupped his listening ear. "He's strummin' the dulci-more!"

"The dulcimore! The Singin' Gatherin'!" I blurted excitedly. "Oh! I wish I could stop and listen." I was as surprised at my own presumption as I was to hear the consenting voice of Ethan Turley. The children clapped their hands in delight.

We stopped for a while and listened,

but Ethan said they'd be bound to go on, as Phronie's folks were expecting them. He added, however, "Woman, it don't take eyespecs to see how Uncle Abner's dulci-more and the singin' pleasure you. You stay here, and we'll go on. Come sundown we'll be along and fetch you back with us to the Kearey House."

I stood a moment in the road and watched them drive on. Then, with my portable typewriter in one hand, brief case in the other, I balanced myself as I stepped cautiously along the foot log that spanned the creek. Following the footpath through a straggly corn patch I came at length to Uncle Abner's. In the foreyard of his little cabin he sat with a group of neighbor folk, old and young seated on puncheon benches: one with a mouth harp, another with a home-made banjo, another with a fiddle.

At sight of me the music ceased. I put down my portable and brief case and stood empty handed. It is the stranger's sign of good faith in the mountains.

Then old Uncle Abner, dulcimer in hand, arose. For a moment he eyed me suspiciously. Presently a friendly smile lighted his face. "Woman, now that I scrutinize you and taken notices of them contrapshuns," indicating my portable and brief case, "I memorize you. You're the Traipsin' Woman that follers the law with the jedge and a passel of lawyers."

With all the graciousness of nobility he bade me welcome to the Singin' Gatherin'. He told how his grandsir before him, and "his'n afore him," had carried on the Singin' Gatherin' ever on the second Sunday in June. He vowed he meant to keep it up as long as there was life in his body.

"Scrouge over, Little Chad," he said to a small boy in homespun jeans and knitted galluses. "You and Emmaline make room for the Traipsin' Woman 'longside you on the bench."

Then he called upon each one in turn to sing a ditty, a lonesome tune, or a play-game song. He called upon old Granny Mullins in her linsey-woolsey frock and slat bonnet to lead off in a foot-washin' hymn tune. He took good care to point out to me, "You taken notice we ain't steppin' the tune. We hold to the Primitive Baptist faith and we don't favor dancin', leastwise not on the Lord's day."

There were play-game songs and sea chanteys, there were words of traditional Kentucky mountain baptizin' and funeralizin' and foot-washin' hymns—all sung in the slow meter of the Gregorian chant of the sixth century. Though of course Uncle Abner and his neighbors did not know that. They were simply "hymn tunes" they had learned from their elders.

That never-to-be-forgotten second Sunday in June when I came unexpectedly upon the Singin' Gatherin', I set it all down in my note book, though I need not have done so. It was all imprinted indelibly on my mind. I typed out the ballads they sang, all that Uncle Abner said when he explained each one and "how they had come by" this ditty, that ballad or lonesome tune, this play-game song, hymn tune, or sea chantey, or wassail song.

Then there came another memorable second Sunday in June when Jilson Setters, the Singin' Fiddler of Lost Hope Hollow, wandered into the gatherin' with his fiddle in an oilcloth poke, and, as Uncle Abner said proudly, "his head piece plum full of ditties, fiddle tunes, and antic tales."

I went back each year. And finally they'd send word to me long in advance by the high sheriff: "Don't forget the Singin' Gatherin', come the second Sunday in June."

But it was not until the old fiddler took

## WHEN SINGIN' COMES IN

a hand in matters that I was able to persuade Uncle Abner to bring the Singin' Gatherin' down nigher the level land where folks in the outside world might share it.

To that end the mountain minstrels gathered on the second Sunday in June in 1929 at a cabin on Four Mile Fork of Garner in Boyd County, Kentucky, a few miles from the Mayo Trail, easily accessible by motor. So enthusiastically was the Singin' Gatherin' received by even the handful of my townspeople that in 1930 I was impelled to organize, with the help of the Governor's wife, the American Folk Song Festival, to keep alive this tradition of the Kentucky mountains and perpetuate the authentic interpretation of the ballads and jig tunes that had been handed down orally through generation after generation.

From this Singin' Gatherin', a nation—indeed a world—has become folk song conscious. The handful of listeners in eleven short years has grown to tens of thousands. In 1938 twenty thousand people from all over the nation came to hear the music of the mountains from the lips of mountain singers. From far off New Zealand they came, from the Hague, from the Philippines, even from India. To insure its authentic preservation, the entire Festival has been recorded in a text book which has state-wide adoption in some localities. It has been filmed and recorded in its entirety for the Division of Music, Library of Congress, through a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation.

From the Festival has grown the American Folkways Association, which has established folk festivals in the Tennessee, Maryland, and West Virginia mountains, in the cradle where folk song and folklore has been cherished and where it is produced in its natural setting. Schools and colleges have established folk-

lore courses and forums and lectures. The Festival has sent college students and professors scurrying into quiet hollows and coves to record first-hand the singing of folk songs by isolated peoples. The leading minstrel of the mountain people, Jilson Setters, the Singin' Fiddler of Lost Hope Hollow, was invited by the English Folk Song and Dance Society to participate in their Festival in the royal Albert Hall in London in 1932. This unprecedented adventure of an unlettered Kentucky mountain minstrel taking back to England the songs of his Anglo-Saxon forebears—taking them back unchanged after centuries, by word-of-mouth just as they were brought into the wilderness—stirred the press of two continents.

As a result, the mountain people have been spurred to new pride in their simple ways, and the younger generation given an anchor in their culture. Primitive art by the mountain children has been encouraged and has won recognition for skill and talent in national exhibits. But best of all, when singin' comes in, fightin' goes out, and today Hatfields and McCoys sit side-by-side at the American Folk Song Festival to sing the love ditties of their people, even to sing the ballads of their feuds.

Yet with all its far-flung fame, the Festival has lost none of the original spontaneity of the Singin' Gatherin'. The mountain folk still participate without so much as a thought of remuneration. I have not forgotten my pledge to Uncle Abner to keep it always, while I live, just as he kept it, a sacred thing. It was next to religion with the old man. So today, on the second Sunday in June, the descendants of the sturdy early Anglo-Saxons, who climbed deep into the Appalachians, make their way at sunup, out of quiet hollows, along lonely creeks toward the

little windowless cabin before which the Festival is held. Some bring their baskets well filled with vittles, for they have come to take the day. The cabin—Traipsin' Woman cabin—stands on a slope of land between high hills on Four Mile Fork of Garner, a mile from the Mayo Trail in Boyd County, 18 miles south of Ashland. It was presented by Capt. B. Franklin Cross of Staten Island as a permanent home for the American Folk Song Festival, and its dedication in June 1934 marked the first sanctuary of native song in America.

Here, before the sun is high over the hilltops, Brother Caudill of the Dry Fork of Christy Creek Primitive Baptist Church stands in the midst of the flock and with head uplifted offers prayer and asks a blessing on the Singin' Gatherin', just as Uncle Abner and his grandsir did long ago. Or if Brother Caudill is unable to attend, there is brother Ulysses S. Grant Hall, a preacher as well as a veteran of the Spanish American war, who can make as pretty a prayer as ever dropped from human lips, mountain folk will tell you. Or again, aged brother Joshua Damron of deep-set eye and flowing patriarchal beard, who has baptized more people than any man in the Big Sandy country, lifts his trembling voice to pray and line a hymn while the flock sings back.

After that there is no end of hand-shaking all around, for many of the pilgrims have not met since last year's Singin' Gatherin'. After they have had their fill of vittles and the womenfolk have talked no end and admired each other's handiwork, and the least'uns have quiled down in the arms of their patient mothers, promptly at the hour of two a tall, loose-limbed mountain man appears at the cabin door and with a fox horn lifted to his lips blows a lusty call.

Slowly, over the brow of the hill, a

rumbling covered wagon comes into view. On the high seat is a descendant of the first settler in Boyd County, who built his windowless cabin on the very site where Traipsin' Woman cabin now stands. Beside him is his wife, in homespun linsey-woolsey, peering from beneath her somber slat bonnet with curious eyes at the throng, her child in her arms. As they draw nearer, an Indian girl in native dress of the Cherokees descends the opposite hillside singing the Cherokee's song of welcome to the white man. She enters the great rustic stage in front of the cabin and, when her song is finished, disappears inside. Immediately down the same path comes the piper in flowing cape and plumed hat like the troubadour of old, and at his heels troop the Lincolnshire dancers, children in the traditional dress of early England. They trip and sway in the lovely figures of the Lincolnshire folk dance, which survives today in the mountains of Kentucky and England alike.

Then comes the Prologue. A mountain girl, in rich brocaded gown of Elizabethan days with a Tudor hat and flowing veil of crimson, enters the stage and sets forth the Elizabethan origin of the mountain minstrels and their song. About her are grouped ladies-in-waiting, in full-skirted, tight-bodied Elizabethan frocks with ruff of white at throat and wrist. They too return to the cabin when the Prologue is finished.

And now from within can be heard an old Jacobean tune, written in jest of a Stuart King—the ballad of "Prince Charlie," a play-game song still sung in the mountains of Kentucky at the celebration of the infare-wedding; and suddenly a group in pioneer dress bursts upon the stage—there to re-enact the centuries-old tradition of the infare-wedding. They step the tune, as their ancestors did in the absence of fiddle or dulcimer—step

the tune to the singing of three ancient ballads, "Twa Sisters," "Prince Charlie," and "The Chimney Sweeper." The story and action of the infare-wedding, the celebration which follows the wedding ceremony itself, is carried on by the dialogue of the participants. Then Granny, the recognized match-maker of the mountains, enters with a rived-oak broom, which she places on the floor with the brush toward the door—a sign that the infare-wedding, the feast and frolic, is at an end. The young folks pair off, each couple in turn steps over the broom, and the lad kisses his lass. When they have disappeared within the cabin still singing "The Chimney Sweeper," the stage is cleared.

Now the mountain minstrels gather.

Hard-bitten men in overalls and dark shirts, just as they might have left the plough and hoe, enter the stage; granny women in somber calico and linsey-woolsey and wearing slat bonnets find their places beside the men-folks on puncheon benches (logs split in half with short pegs for feet). The men and boys have home-made banjos whittled from whiteoak with coon hide for sounding heads; the least'uns, long-necked gourd banjos and corn-stock fiddles. Little Chad in homespun jeans and knitted galluses strums an accompaniment on the gourd banjo while small Emmaline sings a lonesome tune; then Little Margy May in homespun linsey-woolsey and Little Babe, he sawing a corn-stock fiddle, sing an old Scottish Flyting or scolding—an answering-back ballad.

Brother Caudill lines a foot-washin' hymn and the flock sings back. Then Rosie Day sings a warning song—a warning to a fair young damsel not to trust a wary, doty swain. Aunt Alice leads off in a funeralizin' hymn—traditional words set to the Gregorian chant of the sixth

century, just as I heard them that day long ago when I came unexpectedly upon Uncle Abner's Singin' Gatherin'. Then comes a push-boat song, familiar along the Big Sandy in the days of the push-boat, before the river packet and the railroad like a juggernaut pressed into the mountains. Jamie Williams with his guitar strikes up a lonesome tune, a love ditty called the Lonesome Dove—the courting ballad of his parents. Lyda Messer Caudill, in her royal Stuart plaid, leads a group of Rowan County children in Scottish ballads handed down in her own family from the time of Mary Stuart.

Each in turn sings or plays a tune. The Narrator, in full-skirted frock of black with tight-fitted basque, sits in a straight hickory chair at the front and gives the background of each ballad and tune and the name of the mountain minstrel and how he "come by the ditty or tune."

Proudly the minstrels sit grouped on the great rustic stage in front of the tiny windowless cabin with its rived-oak shingle roof, its cat and clay chimney of mud and sticks and stones. High hills rise to the canopy of heaven and give back the echo of warning and wassail song, frolic and lonesome tune, sea chanteys, push-boat songs, gay ditties and answering-back ballads, play-game songs, sung to the muted strains of fiddle and dulcimer, of harp and flute. And now the oldest of the minstrels sings his own ballad about President Roosevelt and of Sergeant York.

Like a flash-back upon a screen comes a group of children in colorful Colonial costumes of satin and lace and powdered wigs. They dance the Virginia Reel while Jilson Setters sweeps the bow across the strings of his ancient fiddle, and the children sing:

*A penny for a spool of thread, a  
penny for a needle, . . .*

## COMMON GROUND

*All around the American flag, all  
around the eagle.*

While the dancers hold the last figure of the Reel, Little Babe comes forward with his shiny new guitar; and, seated on the puncheon bench, Margy May beside him in her linsey-woolsey frock, a small bare toe protruding, together they lead off in that best-loved lonesome tune of the mountains:

*Down in the valley, the valley so low,  
Hang your head over, hear the winds  
blow. . . .*

The throng takes up the song and the hills give back the echo.

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Jean Thomas, Kentucky's "Traipsin' Woman," is the author of *Blue Ridge Country*, reviewed in this issue. COMMON GROUND readers eager to attend the American Folk Song Festival on June 14 are directed to take U.S. 60 from Ashland to Cannonsburg and continue south on U.S. 23 for 7 miles to Kouns Bridge. Cross the bridge, turn left, and follow Four Mile Creek for 1 mile.

## THE FOURTH OF JULY

JOHN CIARDI

*He came deep from mother and the lamplight shook  
With it where she kicked the stall calling him.  
Thin as a fence he was with his legs everywhere,  
And home as the softest ball where her tongue washed him.*

*"Nya-a," she said when she called him out and he was coming.  
And "Bring the water," Pa said to Joe, and I said,  
"Pa, can I stay up to see when it comes, Pa, can I?"  
And Ma said "Yes," and so we three men went.*

*And when one minute more was midnight, there he was  
With his head in the world and the rest of him waiting deep  
As—bong—the clock. And Joe said, "Independence,  
Let's call him Independence." Meaning when he was born.*



# JOURNEY FROM THE ISLE OF MAN

MARY K. A. DENNEY

APRIL, 1827. Last Tuesday night the moon being full I walked down the coast to Peel to borrow from John C— a book just over from London, a Journal about the Writer himself, his Famaly and his Country which was one I had never heard tell of before. The next Night I read it through by the Firelight. It's none so wonderful neither, that Book, though we get so few new ones here I'm always glad to walk the Island over for to see Another.

But it has made me want to see what I can do to set forth the Isle of Mann— little enough to be sure because Nobody knows much about it. And this will probably be just the thoughts I'll never speak any other Way. I will be very slow at it for it's not every Day I will be able to write at all.

I heard the Vicar say to Father once, Your son should be a poet, but he was mistook. I could never make Words sing in Pairs, so I will do my best with Prose and very thankful we are compelled here to have an Education such as it is and that I have the Bible and Bunyan and Shakespere for help. Poets, I'm thinking, should not have to be so busy as I am neither, with the farm and my little brood of four girl-Children and Another on the Way. If only it is the Son we want, our Thomas Kelly the Third.

The Sea is His and here we are always within sight or sound of it. Men call their holdings on land their Own but these hardly give us a Living and so, one Generation after another, we must go down

to the Sea and gather in enough Fish for ourselves and for the Trade, sailing from different Ports at different times of the Year for different kinds of Fish, cod and Mackerel and herring besides all the shell Fish nearer Shore and the other Creatures too beautyfull to eat, found in the clear glassy Water of many a cove and bay. 'Tis a fine calling, that of Fisherman, as the Master knew. We learn each other and Endurance and Courage, patience and Faith, for the Winds that bring health and Food may any Day bring Death to us and sorrow to the Waiting Famaly.

We Islanders have had little wish or chance to move about, but waves of other Peoples, Vikings, Welsh, Irish, Scottish and English, terrible cruel, have made of this a bloody ground. We were not strong enough to fight them off. It was wiser not to try and the Winds that sweep over the Island have made it quite bare of Trees big enough to make Great war Ships out of, to return their visits in. I have been to their Coasts but was no ways wishful for to tarry.

So through it all we have lived and We have a Right to our Pride for our Spirit was never Quite Broke.

Some day I would like to write Here about the Vikings for if I'm not seeing every Day their queer old monuments, I would still have heard about King Orry who landed somewhere near this very Farm more than 900 yrs. ago. "Where do you come from?" said our people. Point-

ing upwards he said, "I come from the North, over the Milky Way" and to us that is still the Road of King Orry. But farther South is the finest Monument ever a King set up, the like of Which is found Nowhere else in the World--the little three tiered Mount of Laws built of Earth brought from all the 17 Provinces. On it for 7 days once a year King Orry held Court having the Laws read aloud and Adjusting with a high hand. Terrible severe he was but Wise too. He caused every Deemster to swear he would "mete out Justice as Indifferently as the Herring's Back Bone doth lie in the Midst of the Fish."

Torrents of Rain and little to be Done out of Doors, so whilst I mend my Nets I tell the little Girls again some of the old Tales—if they have helped their Mother and have eaten their cakes to make them Strong and ruddy. Jane must be able to say that she has not Looked too often at her black Curls in the Little glass I brought from Douglas. And our little redheads Ann and Margaret who love each other dearly but will often quarrel must make up and watch our Wee Isabella, so good but so Mischievous.

Tonight our Neighbors the Quayles, very excited, came through the dark to tell us how the Corletts, father and Son, had just come back from the United States of America to sell their fine Business at Peel and return to the Wondrous new Land where is plenty for all at such a low Cost, big Farms for Cattle and Sheep, great Forests of Trees for to build Houses or burn to keep them Warm. And Sugar flowing right out of the Trees or leastwise Sap to boil down for it. Fine it would be, they said, if a big Company of us could go There Together.

Such great tales there was coming out of their Mouths. Father was the one who

Listened best, him and my wife Jane, but her Time is almost upon her, so it can be nothing to her. My Country is Here, where I wait for our son Thomas.

Sunshine again—but Father bade my Wife and me talk again about America. He thinks of nothing else, he says, and old as he is seems amazingly wishful for to Go. Many's the Families here that bear our name but are no Kin and unless the Child that's coming is a Son there will be no enduring record of us Here. He says we can sell this Place and with the Money can Buy in America a rich farm for Each of the girls. Wondrous it must be, that bright Land with Wealth and Room for everybody. Jane grows more interested but my heart dies within me. I can only wait and hope and pray that little Thomas will keep us from being pushed out of the Nest.

*June again.* Little time to write. Father delaying the Farm work, so set on Selling. There's neighbors and Kin he's urging to go with us, offering to Lend or give them the Passage money.

Going out once More with the Herring Fleet, all signs promising a mighty catch. There's no such sight anywhere as the Waves fair solid with fosforescent fish that come Leaping into the nets knowing They was meant to furnish Food for us and the World beyond. It was good to walk the whole Length of the Port from Boat to boat, so close packed together they was. 'Tis well indeed to ask God's blessing before we venture out. "Restore and continue unto us the Harvest of the Sea," we prayed, me Adding in my mind "And let me help for many a Year to Gather it in."

*June 4th.* Something told me not to tarry, and so early this morning I left the Harbor and hurried North to Doolough.

## JOURNEY FROM THE ISLE OF MAN

There Jane had been brought to bed Untimely of a Fifth little Girl, the image of me, as if to Comfort me that her coming instead of Thomas means America and exile.

All is being settled, Doolough is sold and our Company is forming, 20 at Least. Little Maria is fine. Her sisters too would have Liked a Boy. Would not the Fairies change her for one? She has been Christened in the little Font hollowed out of the wide Stone window ledge of Ballaugh Church where we were married eleven years ago and where Jane has been for her Churching.

'Twas only last Year the Islanders was excited over the Famalies of Kane and Kelly, the first to Leave on the Perilous Voyage to the New World. Now they all Come to give us their many Farewells, some envious of our coming Fortunes but many fearful of the Sea and the Dangers beyond, Indians and unknown wild Beasts.

This Morning before Daylight I stole away to St. John's for to see one last time the ancient Ceremonies on Tynwald Hill and to take from the lowest Round one little Handful of that earth which has seen and heard more History than any other spot on the Island. Many more Farewells at the Mount and then a ride home with neighbor Hommy Quilleash who says he will Soon be Finding us over there in the Wilderness.

Started From Doolough in the parish of Jurby in the Isle of Mann on the 3rd of July for to Take our passage for Liverpool. Engaged with the Master of the John Bull of Ramsey for our passage at 5s. a passenger. Our Famaly Consisted of Thomas Kelly Senior, Tho. Kelly Junior and Wife, Isabel Kelly Daughter of Thomas Kelly, Senr; Thos Kelly Junior's

Children Jane, Ann, Margaret, Isabella and Maria, and also 10 others.

July 6th. Arrived in Liverpool. Engaged with Oliver Becket to take our passage in the ship Anacreon of Liverpool and paid for our passage £3 15s. per passenger. Children under 7 years 3 to a passenger. This ship Burthen 500 tons.

July 9th. Buying provisions for our Journey. This Night slept in the Ship and all the time till we sailed, the ship being in Princes Dock.

July 23rd. Sailed from the Princes Dock, very calm. We were on board 171 passengers.

July 24th. In the Chanell between the Isle of Mann and Wales. In the evening came Round the Calf of Mann. Saw the Lights and the Manks Herring fleet just at night.

July 25th. In the Sound between Scotland and Ireland. Wind west and a sharp Breeze carried away our Sliding Giboom

July 27th. West of Ireland. This Day at 5 in the Evening our Isabella died. Was but a Short Time Very ill. We laid her out in one of our Berths till Burial time next Morning.

July 28th. Our Isabella was committed to the Deep and was not Seen no more. Burial Service Read by the Captain. My Wife fell to the Deck in a Deep Swoon. A sorrowful time for parents but as she was a Child of only 3 years we may Say with St. John, Blessed are the Dead which Die in the Lord—

"When the Archangel sounds his  
Trump  
And Souls to Bodys Join

## COMMON GROUND

*Millions Then would wish their  
Lives  
Had Been so short as Thine."*

*August 15th.* Spoke the *Margaret of Cork* bound for *Quebec*, out 35 days with upwards of 100 Passengers. Had her Main-sail carried away in the Gale which is striking us now. Tons of water pounding down on the decks, the Ship creaking and Groaning. Now we labour in a trough of the Sea and now we try to reach the Sky. But this is a proud Ship well manned and provided with sails enough to keep us steady. But terror and sickness among those unused to the Sea. I do what I can, often using that gift of healing which I do not understand but give thanks for, and I keep the Children quiet with songs and stories.

*August 20th.* Calm light Airs again and pleasant weather. Wonderful it is to Be here when a Day is Born or when it dies in the West with the Moon shining above. I never was so long out of Sight of land before, seeing the Sky like a great blue Bowl or matching the sea in other Colours. We shall never feel the Same toward the Sea since we gave to its Keeping our little *Isabella*.

*August 22nd.* Out Fishing in the Jolly Boat with the Sailors. Caught None. When Sounding, the Sailors give the Sand to the Children so they can say they have seen the Bottom of the Sea. They are fine Fellows and have made me free of the Fo'cas'le to enjoy their hornpipes, old Chanties and Yarns that not many will listen to, tales told so often they believe they are True, but they Pass the time. These Men have sailed the 7 seas. Great signs and wonders have they seen, with narrow escapes from Wreck and savages, from famine and thirst, wild beasts, fire, Icebergs, and rushing mighty Winds.

*August 27th.* Sable Island in Sight. Singing for Joy.

*August 28th.* Another Sudden Gale and darkness. The little Girls ask how can the Old Man of the Mountain see us so far, for to sound his Horn. In the dark we came near running down a Fishing Smack but instead they rescued one of our Passengers washed overboard. I think Boats should somehow go in Pairs but maybe sometime there will be ways to Speak each other but not in my Time.

*Monday, the 3rd of September.* Saw the Land of Long Island at 10 o'clock in the morning about 20 miles away. Several sails in Sight.

*Tuesday, September 4th.* Saw the Floating Light 15 miles distance from Sandy Hook Lighthouse. Took a pilote on Board a mile to the west of the light ship. We went in close to Sandy Hook point in the South passage because our Ship drew too much water for the North passage. There is Buoys to go by and the passage is Very Dangerous. The passage Between Long Island and Staten Island is about a mile Broad with forts on each side, about 9 miles from New York. We Came to anchor at the Quarantine ground and was inspected. From this place the Land was as Beautyfull as I ever Saw. I went on Shore this Evening in the Jolly Boat along with the Captain and three of the Sailors to Buy provisions. We were on Sea 43 Days. The number of shipping here is immense. I think this place exceeds any port I ever Saw. The land on the Shore Side is very Low, with trees to be Seen everywhere.

*Wednesday the 5th.* At anchor in the Quarantine Ground. 20 Vessels at anchor with us. Steam boats pass by here from New York to Staten Island every hour.



100  
10  
20  
30  
40  
50  
Thomas Kelly and  
Family's Journal To  
America in the Year  
1827

Started From Doolough in the parish  
of Turby in the Isle of Mann on the  
3<sup>d</sup> of July for to Take our passage for  
Liverpool Engaged with the Master of the  
John Bull of Ramsey for our passage at  
5 a passenger our Family Consisted of  
Thomas Kelly Senior Tho. Kelly Junior

## COMMON GROUND

The Number of Ships and Small Vessels is a very Grand sight to See and the Land is very Beautyfull. A ship is at anchor with Smallpox on board. Two men and a child died.

*September 6th.* We were on Shore in the Village of Thompkinsville Buying provisions by permission from the Doctor at the Health Office. We met Garret the Tanner from Ramsey and two other Manks men, passengers from on Board the Indus. 66 days from Liverpool and had been short of provisions and water.

*Saturday the 8th.* The pilote came on Board at 7 in the morning and had a Bill of Health from the Doctor and we weighed anchor and Sailed up for York. We passed several Islands with forts on them. We landed at a wharf on the west Side of the City near the Steam Boats wharf. We went to Washington Market House to buy provisions, a Very Grand Market. The sight of fruit Here is wonderful to us. The City Hall is a Very Grand Building and the Square around it is Green with Grass and divided into Diamond Squares with Gravel walks and surrounded with Trees. Long street near this is said to Be 7 miles long and 20 yards Broad. The Buildings and Streets exceeds those of Liverpool and we like it Very well. Provisions sells very cheap.

*Sunday the 9th.* Very hot. We were at St. Pauls Church in the morning. The service here was Nearly the Same as our Church of England except the prayers for the ministers of the States when ours was for the King. And the Churching of women was Different.

*Monday the 10th.* Very hot. Thermometer 79 Degrees High this Day. Our goods inspected and we Hired 2 cars to Carry them from the Ship.

*Wednesday the 12th.* At 10 o'clock in the morning we started from Coenties wharf in the *Swiftsure* up Hudsons River sailing at the rate of 8 miles an hour. The Number of Schooners and Sloops is a great wonder to us. The river is not Very Broad and has a great many windings. The Hills on each Side is Covered with wood and shrubs. Paid for our passage one Doller per passenger and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  a Doller for Children under 12 years of age and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  a Doller for our luggage.

*Thursday the 13th.* At Albany after a passage of 22 Hours, being 165 miles. We engaged with the Owners of Boat *Lawrence* to carry us up the Buffaloe Canal paying one cent a mile for Grown persons and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cent for Children under 12 and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  a Doller per Cwt. for Luggage. At 2 o'clock this evening we passed the town of Troy 6 miles from Albany. At 4 o'clock Came to the Nine Locks which Rises 100 feet high before we get to the Level. The Canal divides here into two Branches, one to Buffaloe, the other to Upper Canada. The land here is very Beautyfull.

*Friday the 14th.* The number of Fruit Trees on every side of the Canal is Innumerable. Boatmen Change horses every 12 miles. They drive at the rate of 3 miles an Hour. This night was Very Dark with rain, thunder, and Lightning. There is Very Excellent Buildings of Timber on every side of the Canal. The Farmers houses is painted white with red roofs and cellars under them and Very Clean.

*September 16th.* Passed the Town of Herchemer and the Village of German Flatts, Frankfort, Utica, Rome. This morning we saw an Indian Hut near the Canal with a man and his Wife in it. Some of our passengers gave them Tobacco which they were Very Fond of. At



## JOURNEY FROM THE ISLE OF MAN

11 we were at the Village of Santaport and discharged the principal part of our Cargo Being Iron Nails and Shot. This is a very small Village on Each side of the Canal. Some frost this Night.

*September 17th.* At 7 o'clock we arrived at the Town of Rochester, larger than Albany. There is 4 Churches and Three Burying places. Here we met Wm. Kneen, John Morrison and Wife, and Wm. Morrison, Hugh Quirk and Famaly, and John Joughin, all in good health and doeth well, and also Matthew Kewin and famaly. We had a Joyfull meeting but a short one as the Boat was in a Hurry.

*September the 19th.* Lockport. 5 double Locks which rises 64 feet. The Canal is cut 20 feet deep out of solid Limestone. There is a Narrow Lake which serves for a Canal from Pindelton to Tonowanta. Saw a part of Lake Niagaria and the Boundary Between the United States and the British Settlement, which is a Narrow Strait of Lake Niagaria between Grand Island and Upper Canada. At the Town of Buffaloe we saw several Indians. On the Canal 6 Days. The Lake here looks like a large Sea.

*Thursday the 20th.* Engaged with the Captain of the Schooner *Andrew* of Buffaloe to Carry us to Fairport, Ohio, paying one Doller a passenger and 2s. 6d. per barrel for Luggage. Sailed at 2 o'clock from Buffaloe, carrying all sail. Fair and smooth Water on a large Lake of good fresh Water. We have Nothing to do when we want water but to cast down a Bucket and draw out. 60 passengers, some of them very Sick with Sailing on Fresh water. This Schooner is a Very Fast Sailor. We sail near the south west Shore and have the Land in Sight all along. Looks as if covered with Timber.

*Friday the 21st.* Arrived at Fairport after 25 hours. Will sleep in the Schooner this Night.

*Saturday the 22nd.* Hired 2 team of Oxen for to carry our Goods to the Village of Painesville and rented a house belonging to One Mr. Hull for 2 and a Half Dollers per month. Slept in this House the first Night on Land in America after 80 Days from my Old Habitation, the Doolough in the Parish of Jurby in the Isle of Mann.

*The 1st of January, 1828.* Bought a farm of Spincer Phelps containing 72 acres, in Concord Township, for the Sum of 800 Dollars.

Thomas Kelly Sr. Died the 5th of January 1828, aged 67 years. Buried the 7th of said Month in the Painesville Burying Ground.

It tries our Faith and Courage. Out of our little Company of 19, the youngest after only 4 Days finding her grave in the Deep and now 7 Days after we have bought a Farm, the Oldest laid away among Strangers in the new Land he was so determined to see.

*January 17th.* Shifted to our own Home on the Farm.

*April 10, 1830.* Today I find this old Book begun so Joyfull 3 years ago. We are still on the Farm but it has been too Great a Struggle and we will sell it as best we can and try Something else. For now, strange as all the Rest that has happened to us, we have the Son who might have kept us in the Island, our Thomas, with Edward added as is the Way nowadays. This Boy, dark like his Mother, is a Month old today, bound to be an idol even if not the first born.

1845. Long Years in this adopted Country, unused still to its bitter Winters and long hot Summers and new Labours. Our little Island company is scattered. Others near by come often to see us. I like to keep old Memories green but Jane has cast all that behind her. She is Wiser than me. The Children are a wondrous Comfort. Good Scholars, in School a while and then Teaching. Maria has her home with my Sister Isabella, learning Spinning, weaving, and all that. There's another Daughter, Sarah, with Isabella added in Memory of her we lost. And there's Frederick Henry, born in Canada where we Lived a few years. We had become good Americans and I had begun to vote but was somehow wishful for to be again on British soil. So back we came, finding Ohio more to our liking after all, so many Manx are settling here. And here was born our Seymour John, bright and funloving like all the Rest and Looking like none of them. It is Very Interesting, this Quiver full of them. Half are like me and my Fiery heart is quietened in trying to help them Wisely.

Almost a score of Years gone by. To our 8 Children have been added life Partners we are proud of, Men diligent in Business, young Wives fine and loyal. And before we could realize it they had begun to lay in our arms their little human Bundles, our Fourth Generation in this adopted Country. Fine it is to be where they can all come often to see us and wondrous Good they are to us in this peaceful Country home they have helped to provide. We have failed to do Half what we came so full of determination to do. They must do it instead. The unusual Labours forced upon me here have taken a heavy Toll. First my good Right Hand and now my precious Sight.

How I loved our Island. We had Time

there. How they rush around, these Americans, afraid they will die before they can Finish what they have begun. I thought it would be a Comfort in this strange Land to sing with them the Songs of Zion, but when I had put in all the Quavers and hemi-semi-demi-Quavers we loved at home, I was singing alone. The Rest of the Congregation had no time for anything Extra.

There wasn't much room to grow and change over there. I hadn't felt the Need of it but my Children would have. We were independent and content and none of our Race are ever Paupers, but we do like to do the easiest thing and Nature helped us. Thus our Mountains are not high. To get beyond them we go round. We do not need to Tunnel them. We are told that hard work and Troubles make one better and stronger. It is certain they were here waiting for me. I was not prepared for the great Change. I trusted man too much and myself not enough. It hurted me that I must always be on my Guard. Only may I keep from growing bitter and may my Children as fine Citizens learn the give and take which is Life.

Now that my mortal Sight is going, I see other things more Clear. Your old Men shall dream Dreams. I thank God every day for our Island and for the Pictures of it that's on my heart and brain. Our *Ellin Vannin Veg Veen*. Nightly on My bed I sing the old psalms and hymns and think of the Home beyond where Jane has already gone.

In the Evening-Time it shall be Light.

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*From one of his Journals, which still survives, and from old letters and family tradition, Mary Kelly Ames Denney of Chicago has woven this story of her grandfather's journey to America.*

## THE GOOD-NEIGHBOR POLICY—AT HOME

ROI OTTLEY

THE nation was shocked by the bloody race riot in Detroit on February 28. Here two thousand whites engaged in pitched battle with five hundred Negroes to prevent them from occupying the Sojourner Truth Homes, a housing project built with public funds for Negro defense workers. Mob rule had gripped one of the country's principal arteries of war industry, and—worse—the riot was seized upon by Axis agents to stir up racial strife and disrupt war production. From Tokyo, Rome, and Berlin, lurid accounts of the affair were beamed by short wave to critical India and to sensitive South America in an effort to prove that "democracy," American style, is a shabby abstraction implemented by no tangible safeguards for the rights of colored people. Inflammatory pamphlets, beating the same drum and apparently of Axis origin, were hurled through Detroit's Negro neighborhood, already incensed by the affair.

Race conflicts in the United States are of undoubted propaganda value to the Nipponese, who would convince the darker millions of India, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Americas that Japan's sole war aim is to liberate the colored races from the domination, oppression, and cultural brutality of the white race. To Berlin and Rome, otherwise cynical about such matters, race riots are likewise useful exhibits to hold before the world as proof that America cannot win because it is a nation paralyzed by internal quarrels which a weak government is powerless to resolve.

And the Federal government in this case did demonstrate weakness: city and Federal officials gave in to mob rule in Detroit, temporarily at least. All occupancy of the Sojourner Truth Homes was suspended for two months. Negro defense workers could not move into the houses they had rented, because neither the city nor the Federal government had given them protection against organized mobs. This is not to say that Washington has ignored the affair. Indeed, the nation's housing chief, John Blanford, Jr., declared his determination to put the Negro tenants into their homes; the FBI was set into motion and gathered evidence which caused a Federal Grand Jury to hand up indictments. But native fascists, prodded by Axis agents, nevertheless defied the government.

The brief chain of events which led to the Detroit riots is instructive how *not* to handle a racial policy. To begin with, the Sojourner Truth Homes, a two-hundred-unit project built on Nevada and Fenelon Avenues, are situated on the borderline which separates the white neighborhood from the Negro. Before its completion, both Negro and white groups sought to occupy the project; but after its erection the housing authorities in Washington notified the Detroit Housing Commission to certify Negroes for occupancy. The whites protested vigorously. Their elected representatives took the issue to the Capitol, and twenty-four hours later the decision was reversed, the project given to

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whites, and the official who had approved Negro occupancy discharged. The Negroes then protested with as much vigor as had the whites, and delegations were dispatched to Washington. Two weeks elapsed before the Federal authorities acted. When they did, the order was rescinded, reportedly upon White House intervention, and the Detroit officials were again instructed to certify Negroes.

Meanwhile tempers flared. White citizens began a day-and-night vigil of picket lines before City Hall. The Ku Klux Klan entered the confused picture, and the picket lines were shifted to the project's location. Then the explosion of February 28th occurred, in which the police—photographs of the riot prove—fought on the side of the whites, later arresting 104 Negroes and only two whites.

That this outburst was not spontaneous is evident from the fact that the Federal Grand Jury indicted three officers and members of the National Workers League and the Seven Mile-Fenelon Improvement Association, charging them with conspiracy to prevent Negro tenants from occupying the project. The indictment charged, too, that prior to the riot, and since that time, these men had publicly threatened "rioting and bloodshed" if the prospective Negro tenants were permitted to move in. The FBI investigation also revealed a surprising scope to Ku Klux Klan activities in the Detroit area, even to boring from within labor's ranks and to links with Axis agents.

By not taking a forthright position from the start, local and Federal officials aggravated a situation already fraught with racial feeling. Instead of standing firmly by their first decision, they attempted to jockey the issue. Yet, as demonstrated in the past, there are officials in Washington who can take a firm stand and deal with a racial issue squarely. When faced with

action by whites who threatened to prevent Negro families from moving into a project outside Norfolk, Virginia, the officials openly declared that the project had been designated for Negroes and there would be no change in this decision. This was sufficient to close the matter.

If, in the beginning, the Detroit project had been opened to both races, the situation would probably have been solved equitably. Neither group could have claimed with any justice to have been discriminated against, and such a decision would not have altered the neighborhood pattern. Nor would Axis agents have had a leg to stand on. As a matter of sound policy, public housing should not help to establish residential segregation, which is certainly contrary to the fundamental law of the land. If, as Robert C. Weaver, former Special Assistant to the Administrator of the United States Housing Authority, has correctly pointed out, other public facilities are open to all races—as is the case in Detroit—then public housing should be no less democratic.

To be candid, the whole idea of "white" and "Negro" projects is archaic, conceived in terms of the past rather than the future. Moreover, since housing projects are built for an occupancy of sixty years, the concept of "Negro" and "white" projects is extremely dangerous; through it the Federal government becomes an instrument for perpetuating undemocratic divisions between its citizens. Certain progressive officials in Washington have recognized this danger, but attempts to meet it squarely have been hog-tied by Southern legislators.

Unfortunately, established racial patterns are not always easy to change. When a project or a neighborhood is once designated as "white" and whites enter it on that basis, they often come to believe they have a vested interest in the area, and so resist change. The introduction of Negro

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tenants into such a project, the housing authorities apparently fear, would embroil them in sharp racial difficulties. But even at first blush such difficulties are not insurmountable. When, for example, the Chicago Housing Authority took the bull by the horns and initiated its plan of distributing Negro tenants throughout the Jane Addams project, the reaction there was significant: resident whites backed up the firm stand of the Authority for lifting the color bar and vigorously opposed the few white tenants who expressed resentment. No serious or lasting problems resulted.

If, as we declare daily, the United States is fighting a war to extend democracy to all peoples, then the Federal officials must fall into step and dictate policies which envision a new and democratic era. They must lead the way, not pander to backward localities. The recalcitrants will be brought into line by a socially-aware public opinion. Any forward view of future America must point to a new understanding between the races. It is almost axiomatic that the proper growth of a country toward orderly realization of democratic aspirations is impossible without personal and joint relations between its citizens. Mixed occupancy in public housing projects is a step in this direction.

Yet two formidable myths are generally used to oppose this very desirable end. The charges are made that Negro tenants cause deterioration of property and decline in neighborhood standards, and depreciate property values; and that the two races cannot live harmoniously together in the same project. To put it briefly and bluntly, it is held that Negroes are loud, destructive, unclean tenants and therefore impossible neighbors.

Myth or reality, these allegations form tangible bars against the Negro. They have been repeated so widely and so insistently, Robert C. Weaver observes, that they

have found general acceptance among the American people. Yet they are mouthed chiefly by banks and real estate operators, who seek to cash in on segregated housing. In fact the major opposition to mixed occupancy—of both private and public housing—comes from the real estate owners, who frequently engineer what appears on the surface popular opposition to the idea. By skillful appeals to racial and religious prejudice, and by the effective use of political chicanery, they gain their ends.

This, to return to Detroit for a moment, was certainly the underlying situation in the Sojourner Truth affair. Horace White, Negro member of the Detroit Housing Commission, publicly charged Joseph Buffa, a white real estate owner and builder, with having organized and incited the whites to drive Negroes from the project. Later Buffa was named by the Federal Grand Jury as a conspirator. Further, according to White, in a statement to the press, Buffa joined forces with Representative Boykin of Alabama, a member of the Congressional Committee to study defense housing, to threaten a hold-up in a \$300,000,000 appropriation for defense housing unless the Detroit project went to whites.

Such insidious methods banish the Negro to slum corrals. Yet the methods are not always so involved; often they are baldly and openly direct. Faced with the problem of where to direct Harlem's rapidly expanding Negro population, a prominent member of the New York City Real Estate Board, according to the report of the Temporary Commission on the Condition of the Colored Urban population, callously relegated Negroes to the run-down East Harlem area, which the poor white population was already attempting to escape:

"I believe," he said, "a logical section for Negro expansion in Manhattan is East

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Harlem. At present this district has reached such a point of deterioration that its ultimate residential pattern is most puzzling. Many blocks have a substantial section of their buildings boarded up or demolished and a goodly percentage of those remaining are in disrepair and in violation of the law. . . . An influx of Negroes into East Harlem would not work a hardship on the present [white] population of the area. . . ."

But having confined the Negro to old structures and dilapidated sections, which because of the resistance to expansion become congested, the real estate owners charge him excessive rent and, to boot, relax supervision of the houses. And though these conditions may be duplicated in white slum neighborhoods, the Negro is blamed for the conditions that prevail in the area where he lives. If he tries to escape, the process is slow and tedious and often attended by violence from the surrounding white community.

How these problems should be met is no longer in the realm of abstractions. The greatest changes have already begun. Public housing projects have of course reduced slums, but residential segregation itself is being attacked by an enlightened policy which has brought Negroes and whites under the same roof.

Today, more than twenty-odd projects in cities like Chicago, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Newark, Los Angeles, and New York are occupied harmoniously by Negro and white tenants. Prophecies of race riots have failed to materialize. There is manifest pride in the upkeep and appearance of grounds and buildings. Fraternizing between the races is evident. Nor has there been any noticeable decline in property values in the surrounding areas because Negroes reside in the projects. The Atlantic City real estate operators, the United States Housing Authority reports,

claim that property values decreased during the two years prior to 1940 in every section of the city except that adjacent to the Stanley S. Holmes Village—a project occupied almost exclusively by low-income Negro families.

Without fuss or feathers, the New York City Housing Authority, the first such agency set up under the terms of the Federal housing act, has led the way in demonstrating that democracy can be dynamic. Eight of the ten developments under its supervision have Negro and white tenants occupying the same buildings and adjoining apartments. Consider these brief statistics:

Projects	No. Negro families	No. white families
South Jamaica Houses . .	320	128
Kingsborough Houses . . .	460	706
East River Houses . . . . .	130	1,040
Queensbridge Houses . . .	70	3,030
Red Hook Houses . . . . .	50	2,495
Vladeck Houses . . . . .	20	1,753
Clason Point Gardens . . .	4	396
Williamsburg Houses . . .	2	1,617

The two exceptions in mixed tenancy—of the ten low-rent projects in New York City—are the First Houses (123 white families) situated in a non-Negro area on the Lower East Side, and the Harlem River Houses (577 Negro families) erected in an exclusively Negro neighborhood.

Easy association between the races is characteristic of these mixed projects. Negro and white youngsters attend the same nurseries and schools, romp together in the project's playgrounds and craft shops. No less gregarious, the parents have organized athletic teams and conduct tenant councils, and there are social affairs in which the members of both races participate. The women market together, belong to the same mothers' clubs, and are seen seated on the benches of the driveways



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discussing common problems in the most friendly fashion. The art of living together has gone beyond the experimental stage. And, mind you, these are all low-income families, the rank-and-file of workers: porters, domestics, WPA employees, skilled and semi-skilled laborers, and clerical workers. The stability of these democratically-run projects is reflected by the extremely low tenant turnover: in 1941 it amounted to 5.7 per cent only.

Two of these projects are under the management of Negroes, one the South Jamaica Houses in Jamaica, Long Island. Here live 320 Negro and 128 white families, the whites of various backgrounds—Irish, Jewish, French, Italian, German, Syrian, Armenian, Polish, and Scottish. All participate in a Tenants' Council for the betterment and general welfare of life in the project. There are game and craft rooms for the youngsters, which Negro and white parents supervise. Adults also have their game rooms where they shoot pool and play cards. The equipment—the city provides none—was bought co-operatively by the tenants. There are athletic teams of every sort which compete with each other—not Negro against white but section against section.

Naudin J. Oswell, Negro manager of the project, told me that a definite feeling of mutual and healthy respect, even admiration, has sprung up between the races. This, he said, is "without steering by the management." He told me about a white mother who was hospitalized recently, leaving three young children at home without care. Immediately three Negro mothers took over preparing their meals and getting them ready for school, and cooking for the woman's husband evenings when he returned from work. On another occasion, a Southern white family accepted an apartment in the project with some misgivings because of the presence of Negroes. Nine months later, when the

man got a new job, the family was informed they could move to another project nearer his work. They decided finally not to move, and gave as their reason the happiness they had found—the first in New York—in the project's small-town atmosphere of friendliness and neighborly co-operativeness.

While we stood talking, a Negro woman approached one of the buildings loaded down with bundles. A white man coming from the opposite direction tipped his hat, took the bundles from her, and carried them to her door. This attitude, observed Manager Oswell, is quite common among the tenants.

How did New York City come to formulate this enlightened policy? The answer may be found in the development of a liberal and articulate public—both Negro and white—who desired to see public housing conform with other democratic practices in New York. To reinforce this view, A. Philip Randolph, Negro president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, was recently appointed a member of the New York City Housing Authority.

"We do not countenance discrimination," Frank M. Didisheim, the Housing Authority Secretary, told me. "We operate in accordance with our understanding of the principles of both Federal and State constitutions.

"No particular philosophy was developed," he went on, "about housing Negroes and whites, no more so than if there had been but one group to consider. The whole thing stems from the general non-discriminatory policy we have in New York State. In fact the racial identity of applicants is not asked for on our application blanks and is not known until they are investigated.

"A project, we believe, should follow the general lines of the neighborhood—

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that is, in composition—prior to the construction of the project.”

But contrast this with the policy of Buffalo, also in New York State. Violent opposition has met every attempt to build a housing project for Negro war workers. The program of low-rent public housing in that city has been developed along strictly segregated lines, with Negro tenants confined to the single Willert Park project. This policy parallels that of the South. In the few developments occupied by Negro and white tenants in Southern areas, the races are strictly segregated. Negro and white sections are definitely and clearly defined—even to separate walks in one project. Actually each development is made up of two, one Negro and one white. Not only are the races segregated but community activities within the project also are separate.

Policy varies thus with locality because the Federal housing act carries no prohibition against racial discrimination; and also because authority is divided. But a

forward-looking policy by the Federal government can make up for omissions in the law. Obviously public housing cannot solve the “race problem,” but it can make a significant contribution by laying the base for co-operation, understanding, and mutual respect between the races.

Public housing represents planning for tomorrow, particularly where mixed tenancy is encouraged. Those who would oppose it by stirring up racial and religious strife must be held in check, and the tendency of the little fellow to be democratic definitely encouraged by the Federal government. Certainly, such a clear-cut policy would be a boon to our Good-Neighbor policy—both at home and abroad.

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Since his appearance in the Spring issue of COMMON GROUND with “A White Folks’ War?” Roi Ottley has signed a contract with Houghton Mifflin for a book in their *Life in America* series, tentatively to be called *Harlem, Black America*.

## FREEDOM OF WORSHIP

First in a series of photographic studies on the Four Freedoms, we present eight prints from a larger portfolio by Alexander Alland on Freedom of Worship as an inalienable right of all in the United States. While no attempt could be made in these pages to cover all denominations, the studies indicate the diversity of religious beliefs practiced freely here.

COMMON GROUND plans to follow this group with photographs representing the other Freedoms as outlined by President Roosevelt: Freedom of Speech and Expression, Freedom from Want, and Freedom from Fear. All photographers, amateur or professional, who would like to submit pictures for consideration in this series, will be welcomed. Readers are also urged to send in suggestions as to subject matter they think would best present these ideas.

# JAPANESE EVACUATION: POLICY AND PERSPECTIVES

CAREY McWILLIAMS

ON the West Coast of the United States our democracy is undertaking at the moment a herculean and utterly novel project: the evacuation and resettlement of approximately 117,000 men, women, and children—virtually the entire Japanese population, American citizens and aliens alike, resident in this country.

By reason of the magnitude of the task and the difficulties and complexities involved, our social resources and ability to plan for democratic objectives are being challenged as never before. Here is a task which can well be the yardstick for measuring the capacity of a democracy to function efficiently under the strain of unprecedented emergency. Here is a task which can be handled democratically and fairly for the attainment of highly desirable social objectives, or mishandled and botched in a manner that will gravely reflect upon the ideals and standards which now, as never before, we are proudly emblazoning to the world. Because this project has been undertaken in great haste, out of military necessity, without the advantage of precedent, it is natural to expect that mistakes in practice will be made (dozens have occurred already). But these initial errors are not of paramount concern; they can be corrected with a minimum of inconvenience and damage.

It is the matter of policy, of objectives, which is all-important at the moment. To date no general policy has been defined. It is still possible, therefore, to influence the objectives being formulated; but to-

morrow they may have crystallized beyond hope of revision. A clear and comprehensive policy, formulated now, would serve not only to minimize mistakes and discount the inevitable confusion of the moment but, most important, to reassure the Japanese Americans, to allay the understandable fears and misgivings of the evacuees.

In the formulation of policy, the crucial considerations are, first, the type of assumptions that are made, and, second, the type of perspectives. It cannot too often be emphasized, in considering the evacuation program, that we are experimenting with the lives and fortunes, the hopes and aspirations, of more than 100,000 human beings. The matter of policy and perspective is, therefore, the real concern of the moment.

Before discussing perspectives as such, it is important to realize that the evacuation program is not being undertaken in a social void or vacuum. On the contrary, it is being undertaken against a definite background. We are involved in a war, world-wide in scope, and what we do in relation to the resident Japanese has world-wide implications and significance. It is a token of our good faith; it is a crucial test of the validity of our war objectives. The manner in which we handle this problem—particularly as it involves a racial “minority”—may have the utmost significance, not only in the Orient, but to some 13,000,000 Negroes in the United States. It is not only an

immediate problem of great moment, but it can be utilized, properly handled, as extremely important propaganda. It can become an outstanding example of how democracy can convert a measure of military necessity into a program for the achievement of democratic objectives. It is the perfect propaganda foil for the treatment of the Jews in Germany.

Not only does the evacuation program need to be studied in this particular historical context, but it must be remembered we are dealing with human beings, who, like other human beings, are moved by fear and hope, who have legitimate human aspirations and who are capable of cherishing perfectly human resentments. There is also an important psychological kick-back involved in the program which affects not the Japanese Americans but the rest of us. Already a wave of anti-Semitism has been engendered by the evacuation. Already we hear, not from the Japanese but from the ordinary John Does of our democracy, that the Jews inspired the entire program, that they are fattening themselves on the misfortunes of others. The presence of many signs in vacant store windows in Little Tokyo is commonly pointed to as circumstantial proof of the charge, for many of the auctioneers quite naturally have had Jewish names. Issues of Social Justice made their first appearance in Little Tokyo a few weeks ago. The evacuation program, in other words, has a larger domestic significance than is generally realized. The very existence of such headlines as "Get Out, Japs Told" in West Coast newspapers has stimulated race-feeling and aggravated dormant tensions affecting other groups.

It is the possible psychological damage to Japanese Americans, more than any economic loss involved, which presents the most serious issue. If you had been drafted, how would you like to be told,

when on leave, that you were subject to curfew regulations? One young Nisei soldier said to me: "If we can't be trusted to walk down Broadway in Los Angeles at 9:30 p.m., they should take these uniforms away from us." Naturally their morale has been shaken; naturally they are bewildered and confused.

It should also be noted that evacuation has aggravated every tension existing within the Japanese communities. It has demonstrated, in fact, what was currently charged—that there were deep currents of nationalism in many resident Japanese; it has made it possible to sort out pro-Japanese from pro-American elements in the group. In the reception centers, I am told, the two groups are dramatically and sharply divided. Those who were latently or potentially pro-Japanese carefully avoid those Nisei concerning whose attitude there is no question. The point involved here is quite simple: a sound policy for the evacuation program would strengthen the position of the loyal elements and weaken that of the suspect elements. It also indicates that such a policy must embrace a general educational, morale, and Americanization program.

## II

Before considering the matter of policy in detail, it is necessary to clarify the question of responsibility. Just where does the policy-making function reside? The actual evacuation itself is the responsibility of the Army, since it is being undertaken as a matter of military necessity. It is for the Army to decide such military considerations as the areas to be evacuated, the time and manner of evacuation, the persons to be evacuated, and the areas of non-military significance which might be designated as resettlement sites. This responsibility the Army, assisted by the War-time Civilian Con-

## JAPANESE EVACUATION: POLICY AND PERSPECTIVES

trol Administration (attached to the West Coast command), has already assumed under the President's first executive order.

But the real problems arise not over the technical details of evacuation or of temporary maintenance. Even if badly handled, these matters, which are essentially preliminary, would not be of long-range importance. The real problems arise, first, in relation to resettlement and, second, in relation to the post-emergency period. Responsibility here rests with the War Relocation Authority, a civilian organization created by executive order of the President and headed by Milton Eisenhower, formerly with the Department of Agriculture. In the last analysis, responsibility for policy rests with the Administration itself, with the President, and, for that matter, with the American public. The line of demarcation which I have indicated has, in fact, been adopted. The Army is to have charge up to the time the evacuees enter the reception centers; thereafter responsibility shifts to the War Relocation Authority.

What basic assumptions should govern in the determination of resettlement or relocation policies? The first, it seems to me, is this: the government, having created the existing social problems affecting the resident Japanese, is morally obligated to assume the burden of solving them. Certainly these immediate problems of health, education, and housing were non-existent prior to the President's executive order. The government must therefore be prepared to devote whatever amount of money, energy, and time may be necessary to see this program through. Half-measures, ameliorative devices, will not suffice. And by "seeing the program through," I mean seeing it through to a post-war conclusion.

This should rule out any proposals based upon the assumption that the government's responsibility ends with the

armistice. (In one sense, it will be precisely at that moment the greatest responsibility will arise.) Then, too, I think we must assume that the resident Japanese will remain in the United States; that all of them, citizens and aliens alike, must be regarded as permanent residents. The necessity for assimilative measures is, for this reason, self-evident. The assumption also automatically places restrictions upon certain types of proposals. If Japanese were to be kept in actual concentration camps or enlisted in compulsory work brigades, the measures could end only in deprivation of citizenship and eventual deportation and must, therefore, be ruled out.

If we assume then that the Japanese are to remain with us as citizens after the war, every precaution must be taken to protect their morale, to avoid unnecessary bitterness, to insure that the children involved are not victimized by compulsory ostracism during their most impressionable years. And above all we must try to avoid the shock of that second dislocation which may arise when the emergency is over. Any measures which merely contemplate releasing the Japanese at the end of the war, turning them loose to shift for themselves, and probably involving a second mass evacuation, must be avoided. Were such a policy to be adopted, it might likely result in the creation of a class of "untouchables," of economic and social pariahs in our society.

Should permanent resettlement be contemplated or merely temporary relocation? For what period of time is the emergency likely to last? Frankly I don't know, nor does anyone. But I find it extremely difficult to imagine that the Japanese will eventually resettle again in large numbers on the West Coast. In California, at least, the doors have been locked behind them. Already measures are being initiated to tighten up the loopholes in the Alien

Land Act; to bar Japanese from certain trades and professions; to make it, in effect, impossible for them to return. Even assuming that certain of these measures might be unconstitutional (so far as citizens are concerned), the damage has already been done. New vested interests have already arisen: within a few weeks the entire produce business will have shifted to non-Japanese control; by mid-summer some 5,000 Japanese farm-operators will have been supplanted by non-Japanese operators. The Little Tokyos are already being invaded by other groups and other interests. Mass evacuation is drastic economic and social surgery; once a group has been forcefully removed, they cannot by mere executive fiat be restored. Besides, it is highly debatable whether from their own long-range interests the Japanese should return to California; it is equally debatable whether such a return would be in the interests of a sound national policy on the "minority" question. Therefore I think we must plan in terms of permanent resettlement, recognizing, of course, that this applies to the bulk of the evacuees as a group, not to each and every one of them as individuals. As free American citizens, they will make their own post-war decisions; these, however, can and should be influenced by a sound Federal policy in reference to evacuation.

Serious problems, of course, arise over the tendencies inherent in the relocation program. Is it likely to result in permanent segregation in the post-war period? Can the relocated Japanese survive economically after the emergency? Won't the relocation program serve to emphasize, that is, to magnify, the "minority" question? These dangers are, of course, quite obvious; they should not be minimized. But there are some mitigating considerations. It is possible, for example, that after their movement from the reception center to the resettlement area (in some cases the

reception center will be a permanent relocation project) the Japanese can be divided up into smaller units of a hundred or so families and relocated again; or self-help units may be permitted to branch off from the parent community.

Most of the sites selected to date are remote from any large settlements. On the whole, this is desirable: the Japanese will not immediately enter into competition with non-Japanese groups. They may possibly arouse the antagonism of other groups by being provided with better services. They are likely, for example, to have better hospital facilities, a better milk supply, than the "natives" in Arizona and Idaho. But one must remember that the Japanese, by and large, are well educated. The government is not colonizing an immigrant group, but relocating one familiar with American institutions and capable of minimizing sources of friction and misunderstanding.

In the relocation projects, much hand labor can be devoted, at least at the outset, to construction work: land subjugation, building irrigation laterals and canals, and so forth. But after the first year (for these large resettlement units can accomplish much with modern machinery in a short period of time) it will be necessary to devise other work projects. It is here that the WRA has a real opportunity. It should provide not merely routine or commonplace jobs but devise a unique type of work for the Japanese—something that will enable the evacuees to make a special contribution to the war effort. If they are given this opportunity, then, through an effective public relations program, much ill-feeling and possible hostility can be mitigated. The opportunities in this field are unlimited: the Japanese can be used in translating, in radio and other types of propaganda, and in the manufacture of many articles of special importance. In the last analysis it is the impending man-



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power shortage which offers the best guarantee of a sound relocation program. This shortage is likely to reach such proportions the nation will insist the Japanese be given important, as distinguished from makeshift, types of work.

One other important assumption, it seems to me, should be made. The Japanese are being evacuated, not because they are suspect en masse—the contrary has, in fact, been publicly stated by responsible Federal officials; but primarily to allay popular uneasiness created by their presence on the West Coast in large numbers in strategic areas—an uneasiness which might conceivably have reached such proportions as to interfere seriously with the war effort itself. The bulk of the evacuees are, therefore, clearly victims of a situation they did not create and for the existence of which they have no direct responsibility. We must remember that of the evacuees 41,000 are aliens, but that 71,000 are American citizens whose civil liberties have been suspended and whose property rights have been jeopardized—in many cases destroyed—without due process of law. We cannot permit this situation to stand as a precedent. It is absolutely imperative that the whole evacuation program be premised upon a sound constitutional concept.

How can this be done? By providing, as we have always provided, for due compensation when an individual's property is taken or his rights impaired for a public purpose. In many cases, of course, it would be impossible and also unfair to assess this damage in monetary terms. What is the damage, measured in dollars, to a Nisei lawyer whose practice has been suspended? Besides, many American citizens, as victims of priority orders, have had their livelihoods jeopardized, and we do not assume it is necessary to make them whole. But to the extent that the

Japanese have been discriminated against as a group, they should be recompensed. The form this compensation should take is indicated by the peculiar circumstances of the case itself: it should be group or social compensation, not individual indemnification. It should take the form, primarily, of the government's providing group opportunities which are essentially the same as those destroyed. This can be accomplished within the framework of the resettlement or relocation program itself—if it is soundly conceived, if it is liberally construed, if the American nation decides it should be done, and will not capitulate to demagogic harangues and discreditable race-baiting.

### III

Military necessity behind the determination to evacuate the Japanese must be converted into social objectives inherently desirable. To appreciate the possibilities which the program offers—for it is not only a challenge but a unique opportunity—some possible perspectives should be outlined.

During 1940 and 1941, I spent considerable time in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, studying the so-called "distressed rural areas" from which so many migrants now present in California originally came. In commenting upon these problem areas in *Ill Fares the Land*, I suggested that what they require, if unnecessary migration is to be checked, is basic reconstruction. Some areas should actually be evacuated in the interests of soil conservation, if for no other reason. But the exodus should be planned; out-migration is merely a laissez-faire type of evacuation. I also suggested that to achieve the subsequent reconstruction of these areas rural reconstruction authorities, patterned on the TVA model, might be established.

In making this suggestion, I naturally

had to contemplate a new pattern of resettlement, a pattern, for example, that would evacuate families from distressed areas *before* they were forced off the land. The idea is resettlement plus evacuation, conceived of as an integrated program. The original Administration resettlement program under Rex Tugwell aimed, too, at something more than rehabilitation. The ideal there was the creation of new community patterns such as those developed in Greenbelt and Arthurdale. The resettlement of resident Japanese offers an opportunity to experiment with the original Greenbelt idea on a greatly expanded scale—for the number of families involved is far in excess of the number affected by the earlier program—and with much better prospects of success.

Note a few special aspects of the resettlement of the Japanese. The officials had much difficulty at Arthurdale, for example, in finding non-competitive markets. Nearly everything they attempted to do impinged upon a private interest. No such problem is presented with the Japanese, for the armed services provide an unlimited outlet for all types of manufactured articles ranging from cartridge belts to camouflage nets. Production, moreover, is the order of the day. Another difficulty at Arthurdale was the attempt to create a co-operative oasis in a competitive world. Occupants were tempted to escape from the oasis and re-enter the competitive arena. They were neither a particularly homogeneous group nor held together by any particular compulsion. The Japanese, on the contrary, must remain on the new projects; they will be motivated by the strongest considerations to make these projects a success; and they constitute a homogeneous group. Also they have a great diversification of skills. They are by no means all agriculturalists. Among the evacuees are doctors, lawyers, journalists, architects (one of the most

promising young architects on the Pacific Coast), and persons of other skills and professions. But the group has a predominantly agricultural base, which is precisely what is needed for a large-scale resettlement project.

Since his operations are dictated by powerful public considerations, Mr. Eisenhower should be allowed the widest possible administrative scope. This project is resettlement divested of any suspicion of dilettantism or utopianism; this is resettlement by necessity—and by order of the President. The War Relocation Authority is an agency which fortunately is streamlined for action: it has broad and ample powers; it is, in effect, an independent agency of government, not a bureau in an already existing department. If it is possible to plan for new community patterns in a democracy, then it should be possible to do so in this case. For Mr. Eisenhower has the people and the skills; he has the necessary social compulsions and economic motivation; he has the resources; and he has an unlimited market, at least for the time being. Hence I see in the resettlement of the Japanese a unique opportunity to work out not only new community patterns on a modified Greenbelt basis, but the necessary administrative skills and techniques for dealing with the whole problem of rural and urban reconstruction in the post-war period.

Nor is this the only perspective that should be considered. The desirability, from a long-range point of view, of breaking up the closely knit, socially introverted Japanese communities in California is a point conceded by many of the Nisei themselves. "For many years," writes my friend, S. J. Oki, in a recent letter, "the Japanese communities in California have been in a state of chronic economic distress. Few Japanese workers

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were able to earn over \$18 or \$20 a week. Employees of a now prominent Nisei leader were getting \$10 to \$15 a week for 10 to 12 hours work a day, seven days a week. Girls working in a manufacturing plant in Little Tokyo were paid \$1 a day for 10 hours work." Little Tokyo in Los Angeles was, in effect, a sweatshop. There were too many merchants and not nearly enough customers—for the patronage was, of course, largely Japanese. The community simply could not sustain by itself all these shops, service industries, and professions. Even with sweatshop conditions prevailing, Japanese merchants did not get rich, nor were they ever accepted as an integral part of the American business community. They did serve, as Oki well points out, as an important link, albeit on a small scale, between the most reactionary sections of both American and Japanese capitalism. They were not at all averse to using both the "Red Squad" of the Los Angeles police and the services of the Japanese consulates in cracking down on progressive elements in the Nisei group.

By and large, the Japanese communities were precariously stabilized on a much too narrow economic base. Hence they could not provide adequate outlets for the amazing talents which many of the younger generation possess. It was, in general, an unhealthy situation which, sooner or later, would have disintegrated. "As far as the Japanese are concerned," writes Mr. Oki, "the evacuation program could become a blessing. Their sweatshops are no more. Their slave camps in the field are about to be disbanded. Their unemployment problems have been solved. Security, in so far as food and shelter are concerned, is guaranteed them. And the progressives among them can now speak out freely"—that is, if they are given a chance to do so. I emphasize again that the evacuation program can be made to

serve an important social end and need not necessarily be regarded as something inherently baneful and undesirable.

Last, it should be pointed out that evacuation provides an opportunity to democratize the Japanese communities themselves, for it can definitely be geared to an educational program. The first generation were never encouraged to become citizens; on the contrary, by United States law it was impossible for them to become citizens. There was therefore little incentive to learn English; nor was there much incentive to study American economic, social, and political institutions. We are ourselves in part to blame that there are strong currents of nationalism among the resident Japanese. But the evacuation program now provides the opportunity to correct a serious mistake in national immigration policy. It affords us an admirable chance to make citizens of the first generation, at least in fact if not in name. To realize this end, however, the evacuation program should be modified in some respects. I think the case of university students, for example, needs to be reviewed and reconsidered immediately. Japanese students, citizens and aliens, should have been permitted to finish their present school terms in junior colleges, colleges, or universities. Provision should be made, moreover, for their transfer to Midwestern or Eastern universities in the Fall. In those cases where parents as a result of evacuation are unable to advance money for travel, tuition, or sustenance, it seems to me equitable that the War Relocation Authority assume the expense. Certainly it would be indefensible to deprive these youngsters of the right to a college education.

Because the evacuation program is being carried out as a military measure, it will not be possible to realize all that might be hoped for out of it in the way

of sound social planning. Social ends must naturally be reconciled with military considerations; desirable objectives must be imperfectly realized because of the urgent nature of the program itself. Nevertheless, the WRA has indicated that it does appreciate what can and should be accomplished in the field of resettlement.

In announcing the policy of the WRA on selecting sites, Mr. Eisenhower has pointed out the governing considerations: all reception centers must be located on public lands so that improvements made at public expense will not pass into private hands; therefore lands acquired for resettlement purposes must remain in public ownership. This policy would not be a serious limitation were it not for the fact that the WRA apparently intends to utilize only those sites already publicly owned—which does narrow the range of possibly desirable locations. Then, too, in an effort to minimize the problem of military surveillance and protection, large settlements are being planned. This is unfortunate since it tends to isolate the resettlement project from the community. In any case, the projects will range from 5,000 to 10,000 occupants. Each center must provide opportunities throughout the year for the employment of the evacuees. Work opportunities will be of three types: public work, such as land subjugation; food production; and the production of war goods. Here, again, the policy announced represents a compromise, but—all things considered—not a bad one.

To date, a number of permanent sites have been selected. One project will be located on a tract of 68,000 acres of government land in Jerome County, Idaho,

designed to accommodate 10,000 evacuees; another on an 8,000 acre tract in the Tule Lake Reclamation District in Northern California, also designed for 10,000 evacuees. In Arizona the WRA has leased a large section of land from the Indian Service, on which the Japanese can produce vegetables from some 8,000 acres already under irrigation. At the Parker Center, near Parker Dam, water and raw land are available to develop 90,000 acres of new production.

Little can be said yet by way of appraising the work of the WRA, other than to indicate the areas selected for resettlement and to point out, as I have attempted, some of the limitations which the authority faces. None of these, however, is necessarily fatal; nor would any of them preclude the attainment of some of the objectives I have mentioned.

What Mr. Eisenhower really needs in this whole matter is not advice, with which, I am sure, he is already overburdened, but rather the understanding and support of a majority of the American people. If the public can be made to realize the excellent social objectives of resettlement in relation to the war and to the post-war world, then I am reasonably sure the WRA is capable of doing a good job.

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Carey McWilliams, author of *"Mexicans to Michigan"* in the Autumn number of *COMMON GROUND*, is chief of the Division of Immigration and Housing of the State of California. His new book, reviewed in this issue, *Ill Fares the Land*, deals with the complex national problem of migratory labor.

## STRANGERS' RICE

ASAMI KAWACHI

Not until you have tasted the rice of strangers will you appreciate your home or your parents," my Japanese mother used to tell us. We paid scant attention to her oft-repeated sayings. Being an Oriental she had a proverb for each admonition.

However, I have learned the wisdom of many of Mother's words and recall them vividly when pressed by the vicissitudes of life. For all too soon, like an uninvited storm, I became an adult and encountered situations that would test my mother's convictions about the tricks of the world. But that is not the story I want to tell. Rather I prefer to dwell on the wonderful kindness men and women of another color, race, and creed have shown me; how they imbued in me a still deeper love for my America. This idea still persists, despite the fact that the seed of my birth originated in a nation that too soon was destined to become my country's treacherous enemy.

My story begins with Father picking up the fragments of a rumor in the early 1900s, recounting the fabulous riches in California. As he dug around for a worm that would cure his gall stones, his mind's eye stretched beyond the dingy Japanese countryside to one resplendent with the beauty of miles of orange groves—trees with gold on them, he put it. Relatives squabbling over the narrow terraced rice fields that were to become his inheritance bothered him not at all. He decided to cross the Pacific,

even though he was warned such an arduous trip would have ill effects on his health. Lightly burdened with a single straw satchel, Father stepped aboard a ship bound for America and sailed to the legendary land.

Mother came over a year after and gave birth in the ensuing years to three Nisei, of whom I am the eldest. My parents became part of the American soil by taking up the plow under the temperate California sun. How we screamed with delight in those bumpy rides on the old mare as they tilled the field.

In a small way, we young Nisei Americanized our parents. I remember the joyous discovery of the existence of Santa Claus. One Christmas morning my sister and I found nestled in our pillows two elaborate little baskets of jelly beans—"From Santa Claus," my father said impishly.

White schoolmates often laughed at my appearance—dresses that reached below my knees and hung like a gunny sack; shoes that advertised an intention for long wear by being a couple of sizes too large for my feet. But those years in Fresno, California, were crowded with adventure, sneaking off to the swimming hole, entertaining Mother and Father after our meals with songs they could not understand, surprising them on April Fool's Day. At home we referred to table, hat, stove, lettuce, and other such objects in English, though my parents were never able to read or compose a sentence in English. When I was still in the second

grade, Father expected me to decipher a bill of some sort. When I could not help him, he blared, "What do you go to school for!"

This otherwise tranquil life came to an end when Father was finally confined to a hospital. I was only seven, my sister five, when he died. One month later, the son for whom he had waited all his life was born. My mother could scarcely speak comprehensible English; she could not manage the twenty-acre farm herself. We all worked in neighboring fields for three years. But without Father our routine was broken. I was in the fourth grade and almost eleven years old when Mother, bewildered, picked up her brood and sailed back to her native land, promising us that within a year we should come back.

We reached a quaintly beautiful and mountainous country in Japan, strewn with narrow winding roads, and dotted with straw-thatched houses. Our bed was a mattress on the floor, easily accessible to the fleas. Was it a strange intuition that caused an eleven-year-old to cry for America in her sleep as I did? I could not endure the narrow school life where we were expected to bow to each teacher at every entrance of the school house and grounds. I felt like a vassal. Somehow two and a half years passed. Still I saw in my mind's eye the brick building that was Benjamin Franklin Grammar School at Fresno. A freckled, red-haired boy named Dexter was chasing me again, all over the wide playground, tormenting me.

These attempts to recapture my happy life in America made me moody and sullen. I bombarded my mother with plans of going back to the United States. At last she yielded. I could not trust my ears when she said I was to go to America in care of a friend. So sudden was the parting with my family that, as

I stood on the train step, I felt a confusion of joy in returning to my own country at last, and yet, at the first drag of the train, an abyss of sorrow in leaving those closest to me.

I paid a price in returning. For, after the first radiant glimpse of San Pedro Harbor, the supposed "friend" laid bare an incredible plot before me. At thirteen and a half, a prearranged marriage awaited my arrival! "I will not submit to a marriage; I want an education, first and foremost!" I cried. This very unwomanly outburst caused a snag in the marriage plans. The sponsors tried to frighten me by picturing with pit blackness the cruelties one encounters in this land of strangers. "What will you do in case of illness?" they queried, not without kindness. "I would rather die," I answered stubbornly, glaring at these men and women of my own race. So violent was my protest they were relieved to forget the marriage idea by placing me in a good American family to impregnate me with some feminine virtues, which I seemingly lacked.

So, through grammar and high school, three middle-class American families made a home for me. As a school girl, my white guardians provided me with room and board in addition to spending money.

The first lady who took me in doubted my slight figure could do the housework, but my size was not the real handicap. My English had become rusty in Japan. I tried her patience when I handed her a plate instead of a platter or a broom instead of a mop.

Here, I first tasted strangers' rice. I do not say that it was heavenly. For, as I partook of each spoonful of food, I hungered for my own family. Sensing this loneliness, my American guardians tolerated my slipshod work and honest stupidity.

The family was torn by divorce, but they placed me among their relatives;



when they suffered a financial set-back, they in turn found me a comfortable home. To movies, to beaches, to mountain lakes, these kind generous people took me as one of their own.

Because of the affection they and my teachers have shown me, I know now the meaning of a kind of love I never experienced from my parents. With them it was a duty to love. To keep the honor of the family was more vital than an individual's feelings. Mother emphasized honesty above courtesy and thrift; the latter virtues came naturally to us. In place of devotion, the Japanese family stressed strict discipline. There was no open affection. I thought kissing took place only in the movies or in the dark. To see a man and wife so indulging openly in front of me caused my face to redden.

From grammar school to high school, and now at college, my teachers encouraged and befriended me. I decided I must learn to write to express my pent up emotions. Frequently I despaired lest I never attain this goal, that I should have chosen such an insecure and impractical profession as writing. My zeal would run out with the scrubbing water; bed would beckon me—when, like a magic halo, all the words of kindness and confidence of my school teachers would snap me to a standing, challenging position again. They inspired in me a loyalty to my country by lighting the way toward a brighter future. It is this inextinguishable light they planted in me that quickens my heart in sighting the Stars and Stripes.

Because of the opportunity for a broad education that this country offers, I feel myself a part of a whole, a humble molecule, to be sure. And that is part of the beauty and joy of proclaiming I am a citizen. A privilege, indeed, to know the tired Negro on the street car, the Mexican boy who was class president, the girl who sits laughingly beside me in a psychology

class. They are my friends, because they too are a part of the United States.

My home and school life is a testimonial that racial prejudice is born from lack of understanding. On the few occasions I have faced discrimination, I have been able to smile—to revel in the knowledge that the unkindness shown only made me more appreciative of the educated tolerant people I have been privileged to know and live with. Thus I think my mother lost the essence of her saying—that we suffer at the hands of strangers. The rice, the bread I partook of with them, was bitter only in my intermittent loneliness. Instead of my mother's conception of a harsh world, I really found a new and refreshing momentum to live.

In the last mail I received from Japan, Mother urged my immediate return to the family. I replied in effect that I could not leave now; I owed a debt to the families and the teachers who had inspired me, and I wished to imprint my share of toil on American earth. I did not, of course, imagine the catastrophic changes that were to follow this letter.

Now my mother, my sister, and my brother stand in hate against my country—hence against me. But so it was in the Revolutionary, Civil, and World Wars. It is not too hard to break spiritual links with my family, for I broke physical ties with them almost ten years ago. But I cannot help sympathizing with the Nisei's parents here in America who are pointed out now with accusing fingers as enemy aliens. However, they, too, must bow in gratitude for past blessings and trust in a firm belief that acceptance will in the future be synonymous with America.

Personally my daily life has not been marred since the outbreak of war, even though my skin is yellow. Even strangers smile and start conversations on

street cars, something that has not happened often before. This continued kindly courtesy cements my belief in the broader scope of an American's mind. Substituting defense stamps for candies does not give vent to my restless spirit. I must act—but what can I undertake with my limited talents? To this question I am giving serious consideration. The instructors at school advise us to continue our education. Whatever I do, whether studying according to plan or serving in zones of danger, my service will be an expression of thankfulness for the privilege of being an American citizen.

First-place winner in the college division of COMMON GROUND's writing contest, Asami Kawachi was a student at Los Angeles City College, Los Angeles, California.

She was evacuated in April to the temporary reception center, Camp Santa Anita, Arcadia, California. She writes: "Though I'm neither a scholar nor a thinker, I cannot help feel the tragedy of us Nisei who have and know only this as our country. Right now there are two roads open to our way of thinking. One is to say, 'We are washed up in America. Our future is somewhere else, if there is a future at all.' Yet the philosophy of the Nisei who were attending my school—and the one I adhere to—is in the American spirit: 'We are just as guilty of complacency as other Americans. We took our citizenship for granted. But we'll fight until the last for our share in the land of our birth, and help America show the world that justice and tolerance still lives in the United States.'"

## WE ARE AMERICA

EDITH HANDLEMAN

AMERICA is many things—villages at the foot of majestic mountains, huge throbbing cities, tiny Cape Cod hamlets beaten by the sea, hot sun on rolling lawns, and deep snow on silent farms. Everywhere are Americans, the freedom-seeking of all nations, of diverse races and cultures, united by one ideal into a great nation, a Democracy.

I am sure of this about America: it is made up of people like me. We are America. The stories behind individual Americans differ, but the universal spirit which unites them all into one great story is the spirit of America. In this way the

men who died at Valley Forge and the unknown men who have died for freedom and human dignity in the obscurity of other lands were all dying for America. And we, their descendants, find in this land, which is almost a dream come true, what visionaries of all lands have hoped for through the ages.

Fifty years ago my father's family came to America, ten years later my mother's. I can imagine the question as it was first asked by the children in those homes.

"America? What is America? Are we going there?"

And I can see my father's father hastily motioning the children to be quiet. Pogroms, massacres, were sweeping Russia. The family had already been forced to leave its home once, fleeing from crazed mobs. If the trip was to be made at all, plans must be secret. Added to the other worries was the fact that the little boys had not yet served their time in the army. Russia was not letting out of the country any potential manpower for the Czar.

With the littlest boy dressed as a girl and with the older one hidden in the hay of the cart, they crossed the border where guards thrust pitchforks through the hay and my grandmother wondered desperately if death awaited them all—if this attempt to find peace and security might not be contrary to the Divine Will. . . .

Safe finally in Canada, the family moved with covered wagons four hundred miles beyond the railroad, and in company with others from the old country tried to set up a farming community in the wilderness. If they stayed on the land for three years, it was to become theirs.

There is something pathetic about their bold attempt. None were farmers; all but a few had spent their lives in study, in a narrow city background, in an age-old tradition that the holy life was one of unceasing study of ancient writings. In their ignorance they spent their entire first crop season building homes for one another. Their winters were unbelievably bitter and their summers vain attempts to learn the mysterious art of coaxing food from the hard unbroken Canadian soil. If they had had but one farmer among them to give them clues to the new life, perhaps they would have succeeded.

They were further hampered by their strict adherence to the binding religion which had been their only escape in the old country. Forbidden to eat maimed

animals, they were unable to trap. In the busy farmer's life, they found themselves unable even to cook on the Sabbath. I have often suspected that Grandfather saw beyond the narrow confines of his "Divine" law, that he suspected that all the rules and regulations were not an essential part of his religion. His skill in making pictures, in flagrant defiance of the literally accepted "Thou shalt make no graven images," seems to point to the "enlightened" attitude modern Americans take for granted. Yet Grandfather was the "learned man," the "judge," and he had to forbid the group to make their own soap, which for some obscure yet important reason had to be imported from the far-off end of the railroad. They could not even make a light on the Sabbath. Luckily the Canadian rivers were so plentiful that, poor fishermen as they were, they never lacked fish for Friday night supper.

Yet, as their third winter approached, they had to confess their inability to cope with the new life. Most moved back to the cities, Montreal and Toronto, and found positions more suited to their training and skills.

My father and his sisters and brothers eventually found their way to the United States, a country even freer than Canada. We have relatives from Kennebunk, Maine, to Los Angeles, California—proof that the land of the free attracts like a magnet those who realize what freedom is and who desire it with all their hearts.

Mother's family was not driven to America as a refuge; it was led and attracted to the free country. Though they lived in comparative safety and comfort in the Old World, the magic word was still "America." America meant true freedom and opportunity. All children went to schools like palaces in America, and studied as long as they wanted! Anyone

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could become ruler of the land! There were no laws forbidding the purchase of land, forbidding one to become an officer in the army or to engage in business. So, although their exodus was not forced, it was inevitable.

Grandfather came over first and sent for the older children. Finally they had earned enough money to bring all the rest. Meanwhile, Grandmother Edith had died in Europe after nursing her family through an attack of cholera. Like Moses, she was allowed only to guide her dear ones to the gates. Yet she died knowing her children would not be herded into crowded ghettos: they would have a chance in the world.

When the immigrant comes to America, he seeks the companionship of his own people. Thus the ghetto district, Chinatown, and Little Italy still exist in our large cities. But the opportunity is there, and young Americans seize it. Not one of Grandmother Edith's children has failed to raise himself out of the atmosphere where he grew up. Not one but has found his place in the New World and is giving his children opportunities undreamed of by those who first took the bold step and crossed the ocean. And we children are giving to America, too. Already we have had cousins and brothers in two wars.

I never knew any of my grandparents, *olav sholam*, may they rest in peace. But I wish they could see our family today. They would rejoice in the grandchildren who are going on to college. They would murmur Old-World phrases of pride and perhaps cry just a little when they saw the boys in uniform. They would be glad we can be proud of our heritage and still mingle with others of different race and belief. And above all, they would see more in our modern life than merely an American high standard of living. They would recognize that our freedom extends beyond material things, that it will go even further in the years to come.

Now I go to school, and, when I have finished my formal education, I will be free to choose my life's work. If I fail to reach the top, it will be because of a lack within me, not because "I didn't have a chance." I have no childish optimism about what is ahead, but I know that if I am strong enough, I can make of myself the best that is in me. That is the future of every young American. It is the glorious future of America herself.

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*With this essay Edith Handleman wins first place in COMMON GROUND's contest for high school students. She is a Junior at Penn Yan Academy, Penn Yan, New York.*

## A KILLER'S KNIFE AIN'T HOLY

FANNIE COOK

RIGHT now," Ambor told me a few minutes before the meeting of the sharecroppers, "I'm non-sectarian Baptist—so I stays a preacher and I stays the leader of the union. It gonna be right hard to give up."

His head waggled mournfully as if my white skin made him doubt my capacity to understand; and I noticed he hadn't said which he was giving up—the church or the union.

Beyond his elbow I could see Voreena, his wife, and their ten round-eyed children crowded against her. Their ragged clothes and skinny legs proved Ambor's need to decide on one full-time job or the other.

The speaking would soon commence. He moved toward the pavilion.

I stood still in the clay rut of the road. The Missouri sun cut at my eyes. I was thinking of the two white men who had put Ambor into his dilemma—thinking of them, and watching them, and wondering whether they knew how much Ambor was grieving.

They moved to opposite sides of the pavilion—Ben, the labor leader, stepping quickly, his slender, coatless figure jerky with intensity, his brown forelock a crescent pointing down his cheek toward thin nervous lips; Everett, the minister, moving more languorously: Ben, in his twenties, old with frowning and anger; Everett, nearing fifty, young with faith and hope.

Through the entire period of the sharecropper strike, the two white men had

agreed only in admiring Ambor and coveting his hold over his people. I had watched them when the sharecropper families solemnly left their cabins and went to live along the Missouri highway because Ambor had said that in that way they would show the world how the landlords bore down on them. I had seen Ben and Everett doubt that the people would go; then doubt that they would remain through the January freeze; and I had finally seen them run for safety—while Ambor scorned to run—when the state police loaded the striking sharecropper families into trucks, hauling some away to tents hurriedly hoisted in churchyards, others to gambling halls, still others to the swamp wilderness. I knew how Ambor had gone by night from one place to another, preaching courage, promising nothing.

But when Ben, the labor leader, came back to Ambor at last, he brought more than a promise. In his hands he carried the deed to what he called a farm. The rocky hillside beyond the flat cottonfields was better than a farm. It was a refuge, Ambor said, and its trees meant logs for the walls of homes, and fuel for fires.

Then on the morning Ambor's people began to march to this "Lawd's Hill" many miles away, Everett, the minister, appeared from nowhere. Praying and singing he led the procession. But at the last turn of the road, Ben was waiting, flames of fury in his eyes, and Everett disappeared. Ambor's people followed Ben

up the hill. That's the way it had been always: the people struggling to live, Ben and Everett struggling to possess them.

And now, in order to win them forever, each white man had offered Ambor a job, the kind of job which would force him to renounce the other half of himself. Today he must decide.

Weeks ago Ambor had told me, "They sees it like as if I was a-listening to the voice of God and the croaks of the devil, each one kinda luring me on." Then the yellow-brown cheeks had folded back into an accordion-pleated grin. "Only thing is, they has differunt notions about which one is the devil."

The audience of sharecroppers, those crowded beneath the pavilion and those out in the hot sun, began to sing. The two white men stood far forward just within the shade, Everett on Ambor's right, Ben on his left, each restless to take the center.

When Everett heard the opening words of the familiar hymn, he smiled at me and his eyes were like those of a man sipping ambrosia.

*I shall not be moved. . . .*

*The Church of God is my church. . . .*

*I shall not be moved.*

*Just like a tree*

*Planted by the water*

*I shall not be moved.*

*Let's ORGANIZE fer Jesus!*

*I shall not be moved. . . .*

When the song came to that "organize" line, suddenly there were some voices singing much louder than before. Everett's rich bass was lost. I couldn't hear Ben, but I could see his eyes now were whiskey-glad—and the ambrosia look was dimming on the Reverend's face.

But for Ambor, about to talk to his people, there was neither ambrosia nor whiskey, only thirst.

"All my grown years," he began, "I been a preacher. I been Missionary Baptist, Home and Foreign. 'Long with being a preacher, I been a sharecropper. I picked cotton when the sun was a-gnawing chunks outa my flesh. I picked cotton when my babies was a-laying under fence-posts screaming off the flies and mosquitos, they mother and they granpappy and they brothers and they sisters a-picking too." He looked at Voreena and her cluster of children. "I picked cotton up and down the rows when I drug a cloth along to keep my feet from standing on the ice. That what I done. . . . I is jes like you-all."

"Amen!" "Amen!" "Tha's right!" "Tha's right!" The throaty answers came from everywhere.

"What I got to say to my people most of them years I was a-preaching, it was based on harps and golden slippers. Then someone ast me to tell him how to git him a piece of bread—and git it in this hyere world. I couldn tell him—so I changes my method."

"Lawd! Lawd!" Like children entering their favorite fairy story, the people leaned forward.

This was his first speech to them since he had escaped from the lynchers' loop during the sharecropper rebellion. They knew they were looking at an Ambor who had gone away from them, not to save himself but to plead their cause to men and women in high places, in halls richer than any they had ever seen, in churches and in union meetings, in universities, and in mansions, in government buildings too, in parts of the country they had never heard of. Now he had come home to them, how changed they did not know.

Their eyes groped for the man they had trusted and followed.

He had come to a part they knew well.



## A KILLER'S KNIFE AIN'T HOLY

"I seen you was cold. I knowed you was hongry. You was slaves to a system what was dead. In my sub-conscious mind I contacted Moses." Ben's feet began to pace up and down. "Moses, he shows me when the Lawd in the Bible wanted a people led outa the wilderness, he didn't fetch in no strangers to lead 'em. He done picked out one of they own



boys to lead 'em. He done picked out the son of a slave-mother. I recollected that—and I felt picked. I begun right then to lead you outa Egypt!"

The song which rang out was "No More Slaving After While!" Ben's feet stopped pacing. His spread fingers shoved the crescent of hair off his forehead, and his eyes were proud.

When the line became "Go home to my Lawd!" Everett's bass thumped in on the words and his lips flared with exultation.

That song ran into their next. This time Ben waved his arms like a band leader: he had snatched the people from Everett!

Gonna roll  
Gonna roll the union on  
Gonna roll the union on!  
If the boss is in the way  
We gonna roll it over him!  
If the sheriff's in the way  
We gonna roll it over him!  
'Cause we gonna roll  
We gonna roll  
We gonna roll the union on!

Before the last tones had floated off, the Reverend began to chant, "Let the will of the Lord be done!" Surprise rippled his forehead when the succeeding lines turned out to be:

In the home  
On the farm  
ORGANIZE and  
Let the will of the Lord be done!  
In the courts  
In the school  
In the shops  
ORGANIZE  
And let the will of the Lord be done!

Ambor saw that Ben and Everett were using the songs as swords in the duel to capture him. I think he saw it as sacrilege. He began to talk so softly the crowd had to be completely quiet in order to hear him. Even the babies were still, and the small children listened. He spoke to each member of the audience as if only two people were in conversation, sometimes as if he was just thinking his struggle out loud. His face was quiet, his chin down, his gaze outside on the row of shacks and the crazy angles they laid against the sky.

"I reckon I ain't never seen no difference much between serving the Lawd—and serving His children. . . . One day

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the bossman he say we ain't sharecroppers no more. The government it got a law and now we day laborers. We got raised up. I done tole Voreena we raised up so high we gonna starve! We gonna git six bits a day. And there ain't no more picking days from one Christmas to the next than they ever been. Then I shouted at Voreena. I shouted at her! I say, 'Fore I work fer six bits a day and try to feed ten kids, I'll walk the pavement till I fall!' . . . That set me thinking about the pavement. I begun to see you, all God's thousands of sharecroppers, a-setting out thar on the hard road showing folks what we ain't got. That what we done. We sot till they trucked us away. Then Mr. Ben's union it done give us this hyere timberland. It's been our farm ever since, the onliest farm we got, the onliest one we likely to git, come the union don't make some folks sit up and take notice!"

Cheers and shouts and more songs. Ben sang and beat time with his fists.

"I right grateful to Mr. Ben's union," Ambor continued. "I ready in my heart to work fer the union, work fer it as hard as ever I worked fer the Lawd's work, home and foreign. But Mr. Ben, he say I cain't be both preacher and union organizer. . . . He say I cain't. . . . He say I gotta choose. I gotta be one or the other, full time. . . ."

Ambor turned his body toward Everett. "Right thar is where the Reverend agrees with Mr. Ben. He say I cain't be union organizer and preacher too, only he wants me to stay a preacher. Mr. Ben he wants me to organize my people strong. . . ."

"Tha's right! Tha's right!"

"Mr. Reverend he wants me to gather my people for the Lawd. . . ."

"Amen! Amen!"

A high female voice cried out "Lawd! Lawd!" And then they were quiet.

They saw Ambor's dilemma—how it hurt him.

"I wants all you union brothers and union sisters to help me find the way. We come this far together. We a-going all the way—together!"

"Amen! Amen!"

"We been struggling always together fer our rights that are and is to come. . . ."

"Lawd! Lawd!"

"We begun back thar when we was all a-living hongry. We ain't had no shoes. . . . And winter ain't never failed to come. . . . Then the government, it passed us a law. Waren't nothen wrong with that thar law. It were a good law. It were only the clauses on it what was fixing to hurt us. And that thar law were full of clauses!"

"Tha's right!"

"Too many clauses on that ole law. The Reverend hyere he says that thar law ain't none of my business. He done say I should keep my nose outa laws, 'cept Bible laws. And Mr. Ben yonder, he say them Bible laws is outa date. He say that thar government law is plenty of my business. I reckons it is my business. To the best of my knowledges, it's my business. . . . Brothers, what is our program?"

They shouted the words which had so often buoyed them through a channel of distress. "Land fer the landless! Food fer the hongry! And justice fer all God's children!"

Ambor addressed himself now to Ben and the Reverend together. "Gentlemens, the good union brothers done tole you our program. . . . In Missouri we plants 'long about the twentieth of April. We plants early. Then if our crop don't come up, we kin plant again. We holds to two plantings fer one season. We plants twict. . . ."

Ben and Everett looked across the pavilion at each other; then, hastily, down at the ground, refusal in their silence.

## A KILLER'S KNIFE AIN'T HOLY

Ambor talked to his people again. "Since I seen you, I been in cities. I been in cities where the word eviction means to be put outa your house by due process of law. That means if a man's got some right on his side, he kin speak up and say so. That ain't what we been knowing around hyere fer eviction. It sure ain't!"

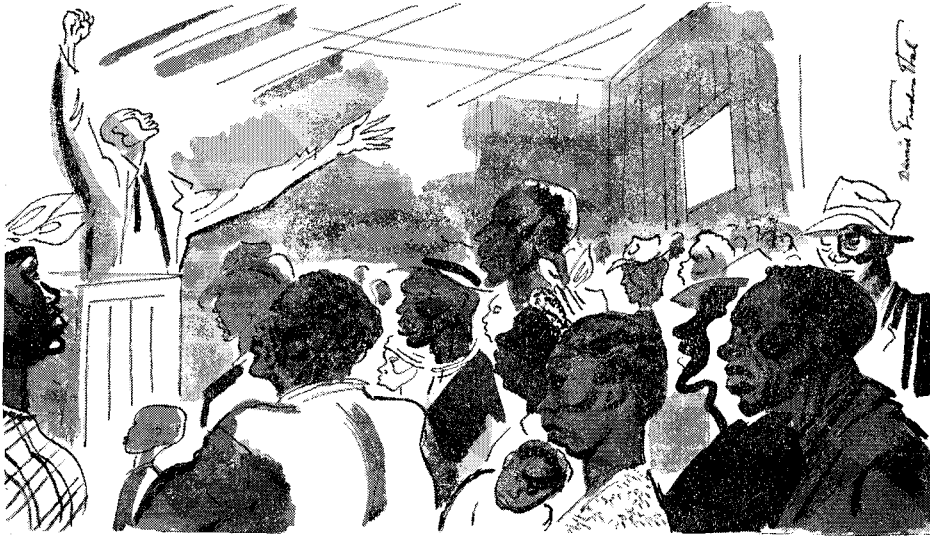
"Lawd! Lawd!"

"Round hyere eviction's when the planter say he wants his house. Then he jes wants it, that's all—and come you in your right mind, you give it to him. You keep back your answer and you give it to him. Brothers, I gotta fight that!" The long body stretched up, and the hand which had idled in his pocket was

we is likely to git a pitchur in our heads of some kind a Santa Claus, a Santa Claus what is gonna come help us. . . . That ain't gonna happen. . . . What we gonna have, we got to build it!"

His eyes were stern. I could see why the people had followed him in hunger, and through cold, to the ordeal of the roadside.

His glance snapped from one face to another. "You is afeerd," he said. "I ain't gonna be afeerd like you is! I ain't! I is God's shepherd and you is God's sheep—and God ain't never tole anybody to let the sheep lead the shepherd. Come I has you a-leading me, I takes me a job to put corn grits in the mouth of



a knotted fist lifted toward the timbers. He was a tall man now. "I gotta fight that, brothers! I jes gotta fight that—fer you and fer me too!"

Ben began to edge toward the platform, ready to speak. His eyes glistened with victory.

But Ambor was still talking. "I want to say this before we any further go. Come we think too hard on the Bible,

my family, regalar. Then I gonna be afeerd to go on a-trusting to the Lawd to provide. . . . But I ain't afeerd no more." He looked from one white man to the other. Accusation deepened his eyes.

Ben was leaning forward. The Reverend stood erect.

"I willing to help both you gentlemens, help you to git on with my people. I willing to help you build us into your

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union, Mr. Ben. And I willing to help you, Mr. Reverend, to preserve these souls fer the Lawd. I willing to help. I don't mind carrying you on my back, but, gentlemens—" he shook his finger and his eyes blazed—"you ain't got no right to go letting your feet drag! Neither one of you ain't got that right! You ain't gonna drag your feet while you on my back! That you ain't! Ain't neither one of you gonna tell me what I not gonna be. I is a preacher and I is a union leader!"

I saw Voreena's chin tremble. The lower lips of her children drooped.

Ambor leaned toward them, his forehead ridged and puckered. His voice caressed them. "While ago, I say winter ain't never failed to come. Well, summer ain't never failed to come neither! In spring the polk salad always pushes up outa the ground. We ain't never starved yet. We ain't gonna starve now, come I don't let the devil plant fear in me!"

He turned again to the audience. "Right hyere I gonna tell you how come I got to be non-sectarian Baptist. When I stands before you in union meeting, some of you Baptist and some of you Methodist, I got to feeling it ain't right fer me to stay full Baptist, like as if I was persuading you. And I knows the ways of the union ain't a-leading to the pulpit. So I figgers out I gonna be non-sectarian Baptist. That frees me to be union too. And that way, I ain't taking pay fer neither one!"

His smile was beatific. He ran his palm over his shaved head, one finger along the bony ridge at the base of his skull.

Voreena breathed a sigh that was part groan.

Ambor frowned. Then his face smoothed.

"I right thankful to my people fer fixing out my problem," he said looking along the rows. "You done showed me that any ole job what won't let a man go on being what he is, that ain't no job. That's a killer's knife, that's what that is! And a killer's knife ain't holy!" His mood became gay. "Reckon come I was to choose, I'd jes have to go to figgering out anyways which job weren't gonna pay me nothen quickest."

Voreena's eyes laughed through their tears. Ambor laughed too.

He suddenly looked young. "I right glad to git quit of such thoughts. I'm your shepherd again and these gentlemens, Mr. Ben and Mr. Reverend, they is jes our company, like they's been these months back. You right welcome, gentlemens. Presently, you'll have a chanct to talk to my people. Mr. Ben hyere, he kin always win the hearts of some of my folks and the Reverend hyere, he kin always win the hearts of some too, but I talks to their whole hearts, I do! I talks to my people, whole! And they is my people, my own, personally! Don't neither one of you go to fergitting that. Cause my people ain't gonna fergit it! Is you, union brothers and sisters?"

Loudly they sang:

*Just like a tree  
Planted by the water  
I shall not be moved  
Let's ORGANIZE fer Jesus. . . .*

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Fannie Cook, already familiar to COMMON GROUND readers for her sketch of Carrie King Bowles, is the author of *Boot-Heel Doctor*, a novel depicting the 1939 roadside demonstration of sharecroppers in the Missouri boot-heel.

David Fredenthal is the illustrator.

# BIG, GOOD COUNTRY

MICHAEL HUDOBA

U.S. CRUISER SINKS TWO ENEMY WARSHIPS. The headlines flared across the country to break a long run of static and bad news.

The guns of that ship were forged in my home town.

As I read the story, on my back in the hospital bay, the memory of Ignace Podolski burned into my mind. His face took shape and grew into the print. And my mind went back ten years.

I first noticed Ignace one afternoon when the three o'clock shift had straggled up the long hill from the mill gates. With that climb, after eight hours facing molten steel, it was natural to stop by the tavern.

"What'll you have to drink, old man?" asked the tall broad-shouldered Czech at one end of the bar.

"Old man!" Ignace boomed like a bass drum. It startled me—the powerful voice rising from a dried-up little man.

"You young whelp! Call me 'old man'!" Ignace banged his fist on the table so heavily empty glasses bounced off into the air and fell to the floor with a splintering crash.

"I'm past sixty." He faced the Czech who was two feet taller. "I work job every day that would roast you like barbecue in one hour." Then, nudging the Czech, he laughed. "Now! I drink you down, till your woman come and take you home in wheelbarrow."

He stepped up to the bar. "Work hard and live." He shook his finger at me. "But don't make the big boss in heaven mad."

One afternoon I was in my front yard worrying with a rosebush whose leaves were wilting and falling prematurely. Ignace stopped on the sidewalk and watched me.

"That was good plant," he said as he came over. He took one of the leaves in his bony, grime-stained hand.

"I'm afraid I'll have to take it out. It's dead."

"No!" said Ignace sternly. He knelt and gently began to probe the earth at the roots. "See!" He grinned, cracking his broad face into numerous unpatterned wrinkles, and held up a squirming larva. "When plant is sick, don't try to heal one leaf. Look at the earth. Study the root."

Several weeks later, after we had been admiring the roses on the bush he had nursed, he frowned, and deep furrows lined his forehead. "Everybody talk . . . say foreigners must go back to old country."

"No," I replied. "They mean people must be citizens before they are eligible for government relief. You ought to apply for your citizenship papers, Mr. Podolski."

He tensed. "I come to America when hair on my face was soft like duck down. I work all my life and spend all my money in America. I make no trouble for anybody." And he shuffled up the street.

The Depression began to bite deeper and harder. The tavern was a meeting place for serious men with sullen time on their hands.

"Machines . . . too many machines. There will be no more work," said one. Many of the heads nodded. "The mills are finished. The country is dead."

"This is big, good country!" Ignace shouted. "You are crying fools."

"Our children are crying—from hunger," echoed several voices.

"You are a bachelor," said another. You work three days a week. You take money our families should have. You don't even have citizen papers."

"If you work good, you have job," Ignace snapped. "If you plant garden, you have food."

He slammed the door and did not return.

With his friends against him, Ignace was lonely. Occasionally he would come over and prop himself on the top step of our front porch. Without saying a word he would take from his hip pocket an old creased leather pouch, empty out a half dozen cigarette butts, and with intense deliberation roll a new one.

I made the mistake, once, of offering him a factory-made. Up from under his tangled gray eyelashes, his blue eyes pierced me with a steely gaze.

"Boy . . . God give you two hands and brain. . . . Use them!"

The wind had swept the last of the smoke from the sky, and the long rows of stacks stopped breathing.

"Mike," Ignace said, as he looked toward the mills in the valley that stood silent in tribute to the Depression, "I'm old man. They put me on scrap pile today."

He looked out into space, puffing at the cigarette he held between his stubby fingers.

"I work in coal mine in Pennsylvania, oil field in Texas, wheat field in North Dakota, sail on ore boat on Great Lakes, work on big building in New York. Now I work in steel mills. Many years my hands work. They work good now. Every place I do good job . . . bosses all say so. Now . . . I'm old man . . . scrap. Just like automobile. Wheels go and go . . . every place. Then stop—on junk pile."

He looked suddenly old, humped over on the step in the twilight. "No place for old man. Just scrap pile."

"Want me to try to get you on relief?"

He straightened, with a loud creak of his knees. "I don't want bread I don't work for." He shuffled off into the darkness before I could say more.

He did not come back for his visits, though I saw him occasionally when I passed, busy in his garden, or puttering around the shack he had built.

America was threatened. The wheels finally began to turn, and the steel began to flow.

Then came Pearl Harbor. Ignace went to the mill, every day, prepared for work. Every day they sent him home. He kept returning.

Finally an old, idle furnace was reconditioned, and he was put to work. But his years were too heavy after the long layoff. He was overcome by the heat. He fell into the pit of molten steel. . . .

Perhaps Ignace was a part of the gun that sank the enemy.

I was the gunner on that cruiser.

*Michael Hudoba's work has appeared in several poetry magazines, but this is his first story in a national publication. An Ohioan, he is now with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in Washington.*



# MARCUS LEE HANSEN—HISTORIAN OF IMMIGRATION

C. FREDERICK HANSEN

IN putting together the story of the vast migrations from Europe which led to the peopling of the United States, my brother Mark was like the householder who brought forth out of his treasure “things new and old”—new impressions drawn first-hand from family and personal experiences and old knowledge gathered from archives, libraries, and original records on both sides of the ocean.

Our father, Marcus Hansen, was a pioneer minister, founding and developing Baptist churches among the people of Danish and Norwegian origin in the Midwest. He had come to the United States as a young man of twenty, from Langeland, Denmark, in 1871. Early in his life here, he became converted to the evangelical teachings of the Baptist church and studied for the ministry at Morgan Park Academy in Chicago. During a pastorate at La Crosse, Wisconsin, he married our mother, Regina Lee, who had accompanied her parents to Wisconsin from Oslo, Norway, also in 1871. Mark, one of seven children in our family, was born on December 8, 1892 at Neenah, Wisconsin.

Moving from pastorate to pastorate, our father had seen much of pioneer life, especially in the trans-Mississippi West—of homesteading, good and bad harvests, the quick growth of new communities. He often told us stories of the sod houses of Dakota, blizzards and wolves of the great plains, grasshopper plagues, prairie fires, from one of which our family barely escaped. He talked about the settlers—

people with differing customs and languages gradually learning to live together. For the most part, his congregations consisted of Danes and Norwegians in the process of becoming Americans, their Danish-language church an anchor in the period of transition.

We moved from time to time to new charges in Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, and Illinois. In his intense religious activities, our father found time to teach us an appreciation of his work and his ideals. For nine years of Mark's childhood, our father traveled widely as a district minister, and at those times our mother, practical and firm, managed the family. In the disciplined life of this household, Mark grew up, developing into the careful scholar who was at the same time never to lose sight of the human elements in his material.

He earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees at the University of Iowa. His Master's thesis was a book on the history of Old Fort Snelling in St. Paul. Soon after his arrival at Harvard for further graduate work, he recognized the undeveloped field for research in the long-continued migration from Europe to America. He saw that causes and conditions in Europe were fundamental factors in emigration and deserved as much attention as those on this side of the ocean. Realizing the dimensions of his study, he mapped out the research which was to be his chief interest in life.

Mark was encouraged to specialize in this field by Professor Frederick Jackson

Turner, whose studies of the American frontier and its influence upon our history had won brilliant recognition. "I am particularly pleased," Professor Turner wrote him, "that you are examining the matter of American influence on European ideals, especially in reference to the spread of democracy. This was one of the things that seemed clear to me from the study of the testimony of those who came to this country, but it must be properly tested by studying the reactions in Europe itself."

For a time the war interrupted Mark's studies and he wrote us from the artillery officers' training camp at Camp Taylor, Kentucky: "It's a tough job to make an artillery officer out of an historian." Back at Harvard after the war, he continued his research; and his doctor's thesis examined the subject of "Emigration from Continental Europe 1815-1860, with special reference to the United States." During this period he spent two years as Assistant Professor of History at Smith College.

In the summer of 1922 began those pilgrimages to Europe through which he sought to enlarge his knowledge of emigration to America. In particular there were two crowded years of research on a Social Science Research Fellowship (1925-27), covering northern Europe, with headquarters at the British Museum. When he sailed for Europe, he planned to begin his work in Ireland, but revolt broke out and transportation was disrupted. It was weeks later, after a detour to Scotland, before he arrived at Dublin and settled down to study the files of the Dublin Penny Journal and other old records while bullets still whistled through the streets.

It was a laborious task to bring to light the facts about American immigration hidden in many an Old-World library. In a letter from Berlin in 1925 he reports his preliminary explorations at the State Li-

brary and the State Archives, the former located in the heart of the city and the latter in the suburb of Dahlem. "I must use my time judiciously. After the liberal policies of American libraries it is somewhat discouraging to encounter those on the Continent. At the Staatsbibliothek, for instance, only three volumes a day are permitted for use in the reading room. At this stage of my research merely a glance at the table of contents may show that the title was too alluring and I may finish the three volumes in half an hour. . . . At the Prussian State Archives there is a vast amount of material relative to emigration but much of it is trivial. I want to guard against getting lost in the details of my study. Professor Turner once cautioned me that it isn't necessary to eat a tub of butter to find out whether or not it is good butter."

The next report is more optimistic: "Whatever I have said in disparagement of the libraries of Berlin, the archives at Dahlem are the most efficient in the world. Finally I received word that its resources were at my disposal. Within fifteen minutes of my arrival all red tape was completed, the first packet of documents received, and I was hard at it. I have a locker in the 'Benutzer's Saal.' . . . Every morning on arrival, all I have to do is to go to the locker, take out the documents I want, and at four p.m., closing time, put them back. Moreover, I am enthusiastic about the contents; it is a real mine. In 1815 the Prussian government created a department of emigration in the Foreign Office and everything relating to the subject—reports from officials in Prussia, from ministers in other German states, from consuls in America, as well as pamphlets and newspaper clippings—were filed away, and here they are, giving a complete picture of the movement from year to year during the past century. In spite of all the

books written on the subject, it appears that no one has ever utilized this material and I doubt if the bundles have been untied since they were bound up, some of them over a hundred years ago. It will be impossible for me to digest all of it, but, having in my day spent so much of my time making butter from skimmed milk, I shall help myself to the cream and leave the skimmed milk for others."

He finds little cream, however, a year later when he writes us from the British Museum: "The day consists in turning over endless pages of newspapers in search of the word 'emigration.' Sometimes I do it all day without finding a reference, even in years when hundreds of thousands emigrated. For at times many of the European governments . . . prohibited the newspapers from printing anything on the subject as they did not want the people to get the emigration habit."

While he searched in libraries and dug into archives, the human interest was always paramount. Behind the bundles of old newspapers, old letters, and government reports were the lives of men, women, and children setting forth in wagons, trains, and ships, and bound, as they hoped, for the promised land. Poring over the records of their migrations he seemed to make the journey with them from their native village to the New World.

At the Public Record office in London, where were kept the letters and reports made to the Colonial Department on the subject of emigration, he sometimes reviewed eight hundred to a thousand letters in a day. "I started with 1815 and have come down to 1828," he wrote us, "and as I contemplate continuing it year by year down to 1860 or perhaps later, I have two or three months' work right in that one branch. It really is very interesting and distinctly human to read

through the letters written by people who wanted to be sent to America (that is, have their expenses paid by the Government) and these letters, a hundred years old, give the reasons. Some of them are quite unique and the spelling is interesting. One man wrote that he had 'served throughout the second American war and was wounded twice on the head and once on the banks of the Miami.' One wants to go to 'an island called Canada.' . . . Here is one that I copy verbatim, written on March 20, 1827:

"Your Petitionr Been A native of Scotland and Brought up in the farmin to the 20 year of May age and put My self prantis to a Country Joniar and then to London and worked in the cabnet way. But was unfortently married to my first Wief hir Been a London woman She give hir Self over to Drinken which forced me to live London and go to Scotland to the Country wher She lived 3-1/2 years and Died Sobar. p.s. Us have Som pack-idges of towls and Som other Bussiness to settel and would take 8 or 10 Dayes to prepar."

Mark once commented on his "prone-ness to pass up cathedrals for a single Yorkshireman or Welshman. There may be more history in the beliefs and prejudices of these people than in the stone of Druid circles or of Gothic master-pieces."

In 1927 he said in a letter from London: "Life rolls around on schedule: the British Museum day in and day out, but I ask for no better existence, and there is still material for me here for a couple of years' work. It is ten years ago this fall since I began the job, so I suppose I should count on twenty years more to finish it, and in the meantime learn Italian, Greek, Yiddish, and Russian. Well, there is nothing like having a big job to do, for then, no matter how the

weather changes or how friends come or go, there is always one thing constant: my work."

And from Berlin: "Progress is still slow, but Emerson has taught me a great deal. 'Nature never hurries; atom by atom, little by little, she achieves her work. The farmer times himself to Nature and acquires that live-long patience that belongs to her.' And so I have timed my labors to the 'Preussische Staatsbibliothek' and have learned to wait patiently at the delivery desk until the attendant has finished his cheese sandwich and feels inclined to take my books from the shelf—

lion migrating Germans. Many of the poor fellows had spent all their money by the time they reached the place and could go no farther. So I notice there are a great number of blondes and blue eyes among the inhabitants, and of several hundred names on the city monument commemorating the dead in the World War, half are German."

At another time, traveling in Sweden, he makes this observation: "The Stockholm papers are full of the 'cold snap,' and the natives go about all bundled up in furs. But I am still wearing my light overcoat and usually forget my gloves.

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Throughout his travels, the process of linking the local surroundings to the history of emigration persisted. From Le Havre, France, in 1927, he commented in a letter: "Havre still bears marks of the passage through it of a couple mil-

There, again, I am learning from experience, for I had always said that migrating Swedes felt at home in Minnesota due to the similarity of climate. But the records I am studying are full of complaints regarding the Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa weather, and the prevalence of tuberculosis among the Swedes in America is ascribed to the unaccustomed cold they

had to endure. The Baltic, it appears, is a sort of hot water bottle that keeps things cozy."

Having an aptitude for languages and a keen interest in cultivating them, he became familiar with many of the tongues of Europe. In some of these he was mostly self-taught. Two thousand cards on which he had written a German word or phrase on one side and its translation on the other gave proof of the diligence with which he sought to master one language as an instrument of research. In a Christmas letter from Berlin, after referring to the wintry skies, clouded day and night, he said: "It is evident that no wise man following a star ever set out from Berlin. Dissatisfied with my progress in using the German language I have thought to practice a little every morning with the maid when she brings my breakfast. The only proper thing to talk about—with maids—is the weather. But my phrase-book provides only two ways of describing the weather: either it is 'dunkel' or it is 'hell.' So every morning when I look out of the window and see that it is still 'dunkel' I instinctively call it 'hell.'"

"Nothing has disturbed the even tenor of my ways," he wrote in the spring of 1927. "True, the University of ——— cabled me offering a professorship. It was rather interesting that this was not to teach history but current international politics and the problems of international organization—certainly a live subject. But nothing will induce me to give up the business on which I have been working the past ten years. So I turned it down, a rather reckless thing to do but it gives one a superior feeling."

Returning to the United States he was appointed by the American Council of Learned Societies as Research Associate during 1927-28. His specific problem was to ascertain from historical sources the

distribution of national stocks in the white population of the United States in 1790 as an aid in fixing immigration quotas for the present immigration law. He spent most of this period in the Congressional Library and archives at Washington, D.C. His data, based upon arduous study of colonial records, superseded all earlier studies of the subject and proved of much value to government statisticians in determining the "national origins" of the American population in 1920, as required by the statute.

In the fall of 1928 Mark was made associate professor of history at the University of Illinois, and in 1930, full professor at the same institution. He was much interested in the varied student body, which represented many national origins. He gave a full-year course based largely on his own investigations, dealing with the history of American immigration. To use his own words, this course was planned for "students who had inherited a language and a certain understanding of the problems involved. Among them are students who can read Swedish, German, Polish, Italian, and Bohemian, and the semester theses consist of first-hand accounts written from the family archives, or more often, from family traditions." In the final lecture of this course, he urged his students continually to observe people from the standpoint of the subject studied: "All the people we see are somehow related to the history of immigration; every name and every blending of features and almost every personal reaction mean something. You may be bored by scenery and by books, but you should never be bored by people."

When the American Council of Learned Societies created a committee on a Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada, Mark was made its historian. He traveled widely in all parts of New England, studying in detail the historical

movements of the population in relation to dialects and characteristics of speech. The results of these studies appear in the chapter he wrote for the *Handbook of the Linguistic Geography of New England* (Brown University Press, Providence, 1939).

A sabbatical year, 1934-35, was spent in Europe carrying on further investigations of European backgrounds in the settlement of America. In February and March 1935, he delivered a course of eight public lectures at University College, University of London, under the Commonwealth Fund. Their general theme was "The Influence of 19th Century Immigration upon American History." In this series he developed his broader concepts and interpretations of the subject, analyzing particularly the relationships of American immigration to national expansion, sectionalism, democracy, and Puritanism. He outlined the cultural experiences of immigrant groups and indicated some probable future developments in immigrant life. These lectures were followed by two others delivered at Bangor and one at Bristol, under the auspices of the Carnegie Foundation. Five of the lectures in the University of London series, together with four of his other essays, were published several years later in his book *The Immigrant in American History*, edited by Professor Arthur M. Schlesinger of Harvard University (Harvard University Press, 1940).

In the course of his sabbatical year, Mark traveled widely on the continent. While in Denmark he made a trip to the little island of Langeland in the Baltic Sea, from which our father had emigrated. A letter to the family describes his approach to the island by steamer, little more than a ferry, from the Danish mainland: "The blue water, the white churches, the brown mills and red villages set against a background of very green

hills were as picturesque and Old-Worldish as any retiring American could wish. Clouds in Europe seem to hang much lower than at home, and when the sun breaks through the clouds, the light comes down in a single shaft. So it did last Thursday afternoon and it seemed to me that Nature was co-operating by throwing a huge spotlight first on a farmhouse, then a church, then a field, then a fishing boat."

The village which had been the family home lay at the northern end of the island. "The place is dominated by two hills, on one of which is the old mill and on the other the church. The church was open, so I went in and sat down. The interior is a little gem—altar, baptismal font and pulpit—associated with the family since mediaeval times. An indescribable feeling of melancholy came over me as I sat there. I do not know whether it was because I felt sorry for our ancestors who were obliged to spend their lives, year after year and generation after generation in the peace and quiet of this country village where all they could see was mills and churches on the hilltops and the blue water on either side; or because I was sorry for their descendants who had been thrown into the fever and bustle and often fruitless activity of America."

Returning to the United States in the fall of 1935, he was commissioned by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace to make an historical study of the movement to and fro across the Canadian-American border since the earliest settlements. This research took him to many places in Canada as well as American cities and towns near the border, and he succeeded in uncovering much new material even from those sections where it had been thought unobtainable. The results of these studies appear in his volume *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples* published in 1940 by Yale Uni-



versity Press as one of the series on The Relations of Canada and the United States prepared under the direction of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. This volume was edited by Professor John Bartlet Brebner of Columbia University, who also wrote the concluding chapter.

At the Conference on Canadian-American Affairs held at Kingston, Ontario, in September 1937, discussing his findings, Mark gave as his closing thought: "Every Canadian who settled in the United States and every American who went to the Dominion undoubtedly thought of his motives and experiences as unique. But the historian can usually classify him, and these classifications are associated with some of the fundamental transformations of North American society. The crossing and recrossing of the boundary were not part of a haphazard, aimless wandering. They represented a search for the opportunities offered by land, factories, and cities. Fortunately the governments of the two nations did not add to the difficulties by imposing artificial or selfish restrictions; and the people themselves were not hindered by sentiment. The farmer emigrating from east to west, the artisan in search of a factory job, the young man looking for a position in bank or office, viewed the continent as a whole. They sought neither the United States nor Canada, but America and opportunity."

Mark carried on a wide range of activities, working steadily, and aiming always at results more nearly perfect. He constantly revamped his lectures at the University of Illinois in the light of new findings. Many graduate students in his field relied upon him for advice and help. At the same time he pursued his own research, planning to write a series of three or more volumes giving a full account of American immigration from the

earliest settlements to the recent past. But in January 1938 he became seriously ill, and on May 11th died at Redlands, California.

The first of his planned volumes on the history of immigration was in manuscript form. This book, *The Atlantic Migration*, a History of the Continuing Settlement



of the United States, 1607-1860, was edited by Professor Arthur M. Schlesinger. Published by Harvard University Press in 1940, it won the Pulitzer Prize for a distinguished book on American history. In his foreword outlining the scope and significance of *The Atlantic Migration*, Professor Schlesinger says: "Professor Hansen's volume deals with the great transatlantic migration of white peoples, first to the thirteen colonies, and then to the early Republic down to the eve of the Civil War. It is the latter movement which he emphasizes. Unlike most historians of immigration, he takes his stand in Europe rather than in America. Leaving other scholars to tell the story of the newcomers after they reached the United States, he opens to view what has hitherto been largely a terra incognita. He describes

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the various conditions in the Old World which made people dissatisfied with their lot: the changes in agriculture and land-holding, the rise of industrialism, natural disasters, political oppression, religious discrimination, the high-pressure activities of emigrant agents. He explains why the vision of America as a Land of Promise sometimes burned brightly and sometimes dimly, quickening or retarding the over-sea movement. He shows how improvements in land transportation made the ports of embarkation more accessible to peasants in the European hinterland and how modern conditions of ocean travel increased their willingness to undertake the American adventure. He tells how people who were down and out contrived to finance the journey and sheds light on the sporadic experiments in collective settlement."

As nearly as we know, the second volume of this series for which Mark had gathered extensive notes would have continued the story from the outbreak of the Civil War to a point in the 1880s. He had planned to show in this book the Americanizing effect of the Civil War on the nationalities already settled in this country, and would have described in detail the great emigration from northern Europe. The third volume would have carried the account to a date within reach of the present time and would have fo-

cused on the growing emigration from central and southern Europe.

The notes he had collected in preparation for further writings have been given to Widener Library, Harvard University, for use of scholars studying American immigration. The Pulitzer Prize of \$1000 awarded to *The Atlantic Migration* was given by his family to Harvard to establish "The Marcus Lee Hansen Memorial Fund," the income from which will be applied toward the purchase of manuscripts and printed material, giving preference to primary sources, concerning the history of American immigration.

For to Mark that great movement of humanity to a new continent was the absorbing theme. "If told as it transpired," he said, "the epic of migration can add an ideal to take the place of one of the many that recent decades have shattered. For it is a simple story of how troubled men, by courage and action, overcame their difficulties, and how people of different tongues and varied culture have managed to live together in peace."

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C. Frederick Hansen was educated at Central College and the University of Iowa, and then became a member of the research staff of Carnegie Institute of Technology. Since 1923 he has been associated with a large chain store company in New York City.

## AMERICA'S FIRST FAMILIES ON THE WARPATH

ESTELLE WEBB THOMAS

AFTER almost eighty years of peace, the Navajo Indians are again on the warpath. But this time their enemy is not their paleface fellow Americans, nor the all-powerful United States Government, usually designated by them as "Washington." Now the Navajo tribe, the entire fifty-thousand of them, comprising the largest and purest-blooded Indian tribe in America, is out for the scalps of the Axis powers. They are itching to fight Smell-His-Mustache and Man-With-Gourd-Chin, and most of all do they long for a crack at the Slit-Eye-People.

Love of a good fight is instinctive with the Navajos, although, since the Great Treaty was signed at Fort Sumner, New Mexico Territory, in 1868, they have been a peaceful and pastoral people, raising great flocks of sheep from the pair given each family at that time by the Government, and farming their desert and mountain land grants. Before that, the Navajos were probably the fiercest tribe in the West, waging continual war on white settlers and wagon trains, on Zuni, Hopi, and Ute Indians, and on their traditional and most hated enemies, the Nakais or Mexicans. They were a serious threat to western settlement by white pioneers and a thorn in the side of "Washington."

Though Narbone, important Navajo Chief, signed a treaty with Army officers pledging safety for white settlers, the belief of many white men that an Indian was something to be shot on sight, like a

coyote, soon made the treaty a useless piece of paper. The white men broke their promises and the Indians were quick to retaliate. Spanish Governors at Santa Fe, whom they had trusted, cheated and enslaved them; Hopis burned their hogans and fields; Zunis stole their stock. Betrayed and bitter, the Navajos looked upon all men as enemies and soon became such a menace to western migration that it became imperative to conquer them.

The story of their capitulation to the Government is a sad and bloody one. It took Kit Carson, who knew the mountains of New Mexico and Arizona like the palm of his hand, to hunt them down in their hideouts in Grand Canyon, Canyon de Chelly, and other fastnesses, and start them, broken and beaten, on what they still call "The Big Walk to Hwelte" (Fort Sumner). Only the hunger of his people, who had been too hounded to hunt or plant or reap, drove Barboncito, Great Chief, to consent to this degradation. Old people died on the trek, literally of heart-break and weariness. And in the ensuing four dreadful years the proud, freedom-loving Indians learned obedience to authority the hard way.

Accustomed to crystal mountain streams, the alkaline water made them ill; nourished on game and pounded corn, they ate bacon and white flour raw and attempted to chew dry beans. Drought burned their crops, smallpox and other epidemics swept the camps, there was no

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firewood. Raids were made on the weakened people by Mescaleros and Comanches, and white neighbors stole their rations.

Finally delegates went to "Washington" to plead with the President that they be allowed to return to Navajo-land. But they were told that Indian Territory was to be their new home. General Sherman, however, interceded in their behalf, and after a long powwow a treaty was made with the Council of Chiefs. The Navajos were to be allowed to return home on several conditions: they must keep the peace, they must raise cattle and sheep from a start the Government would give them, and they must send their children to schools the Government would provide. Otherwise they would be sent to Indian Territory.

This important treaty, which changed the entire way of life and almost the nature of the Navajos, was signed by all the great chiefs: Barboncito, Armijo, Delgado, Largo, Herrero, Narbone, Ganado Mucho, and finally by the fierce old War Chief, Manuelito, who had held back longest. It was called the "Great Treaty," and it has been kept faithfully and religiously by the Navajo people ever since it was signed—never to be broken "until the sun shall rise in the West."

In 1940 the Tribal Council submitted the following resolution to Government authorities at the Navajo Tribal Fair at Window Rock, Arizona, headquarters of the U.S. Navajo Service: "We resolve that the Navajo Indians stand ready, as they did in 1878 and 1918, to aid and defend our Government and its institutions against all subversive and armed conflict. We pledge our loyalty to the system which recognizes minority rights and has placed us among the greatest people of our race."

What the Navajos want now is a chance to make these promises good.

There is a story that the Utes, when asked to register during World War One, called a tribal council and powwowed for several days and nights before giving their decision through the medium of a majestic Medicine Man. "We are not afraid. We will fight this tribe of Germans. But tell them they must come over here to our own country with which we are familiar. We will not cross the Big Water for the pleasure of killing these Germans."

Unlike these reluctant warriors, the Navajos are "rarin' to go," anywhere, the sooner the better. "I'm ready to go on the warpath tomorrow!" said one youth, when asked by the interpreter during the recent registration if he had any conscientious objections to fighting.

This registration business, by the way, was a four-day job on the Navajo reservation. With most of the available white employees drafted as clerks and the Navajo employees as interpreters, it was still rather heavy going, since the eight-page blanks must be filled correctly with dates and information of which the average Indian had kept no account. Few of the older men remembered the date of their marriage or even the number of years married. Some said snow was on the mountain at the time, or it was Spring, as the grass was green; one was married in the great drought; Old Keyonie, night-watchman, said it was when the "coughing sickness brought death to almost every hogan"—the 1918 influenza epidemic.

One young fellow I registered knew he was twenty-one. That seemed the only fact he would impart freely. Through the interpreter I slowly and painfully extracted the information that he and his nineteen-year-old wife were the parents of two children, that he helped support his sixty-year-old mother, and that his mother-in-law lived in his home. The latter situation is quite possible now, as the old taboo that made it necessary for

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a man to avoid looking at, or speaking to his mother-in-law, is almost obsolete in districts where education is general, though this and other tribal superstitions still flourish in the "deep reservation."

I was delving into the intricacies of land and livestock with the boy, when the interpreter stated calmly, "The property all belong to the ole woman."

"You mean his mother?"

"No. His wife mother. Notah, his wife, his kids, they all live with the ole woman. Her hogan."

This altered the boy's entire financial status and necessitated a lot of erasures. Finally the last page was filled in, the completed questionnaire was read to him by the interpreter, he thumbed it, and it was duly signed by the District Supervisor and me. The boy, with a sigh of relief as great as mine, drifted away to gather up his family and depart for the open spaces where a man's private business is his own. While we made ready for a new victim, the interpreter remarked casually as he lighted a cigarette, "De ole man aroun' dare, too."

"What?" I yelled. "You mean he has a father-in-law?"

"Oh, yess," said Kee, "a fader-in-law, yess. De ole man, de ole woman, dey all live aroun' dare togeder!"

The Agency pool hall, transformed into a temporary office, presented a colorful sight those four busy days. For when Hosteen Yazzie (Little Man) or Hosteen Nez (Tall Man) comes to the Agency on Government business, he brings the family along. Wives and children lined the benches around the walls; lean dogs hid under the women's voluminous skirts. The women waited stolidly, or with patient anxiety as to what was happening or about to happen to their men. Some nursed fat babies, while round-eyed toddlers noisily and stickily consumed candy suckers. But they seemed to realize this

thing was necessary; to sense, perhaps dimly, that the freedom which is breath of life to an Indian is imperiled. Of the fifteen young men from the vicinity of this boarding school who are already in the Army, the greater number did not wait for the draft but enlisted and, according to reports, make excellent soldiers.

The extent of Navajo loyalty to Government edict was shown by the response to orders for the first trial blackout. As with all primitive people, fire and water are of sacred significance in Navajo religious rites. Fire, especially, figures largely in most of their ceremonials. In the Mountain Chant, or Fire Dance, the sacred fire is not allowed to go out for nine days and nights. Once a fire is lighted for one of these healing ceremonies, it is calamitous for it to die out. However, when a general blackout was ordered for New Mexico, every fire, domestic and ritual, was promptly extinguished on the part of the reservation lying within the State. Though many of the older people had only the vaguest of ideas as to what it was all about and suffered a superstitious dread of the consequences of such heresy in connection with the sacred healing ceremonies, still "Washingtone" had ordered it and it was done.

So much are the Indian rites and ceremonies a part of Indian nature that Zuni boys in the Philippines (Zunis are neighbors of the Navajos and have many customs in common with them), half the world away from home, remembered their "prayer feathers" and sent word to relatives to make and plant these symbols for them. In this New Year's ceremony feathers, intricately fastened to sticks, are reverently planted on the first day of the year, though deep snow may have to be shoveled away before the holes can be dug. Into the deep excavation prayer meal

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is first placed, then the plumes, to insure a bountiful harvest for the coming year. The feather planting is a part of the "Tesque" period which follows the Shalako ceremonies. During this the Indians fast; no new fires can be built in the homes, no buying done at the trading posts. Zuni school children, by the way, recently sent packages of dried meat and parched corn to all Zuni soldiers in service, as a special treat from home, fearing the boys were beginning to tire of "white food."

Many of the Navajo boys were on Bataan or Corregidor: Jake Morgan, Jr., son of the Chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council; Charleston Begay, brother of the cook at the Tohatchi boarding school; John Y. Begay, John Thomas, Tony James, Sam Nez, and some from more distant parts of the reservation. Others are in training camps all over the West and on the Pacific coast. Most send allotments of their salaries home to parents or other needy relatives. Coming home on furlough, they strut about as proud of their uniforms and decorations as their forefathers were of war paint and feathers.

As soon as it is made plain to the Indians that their Red Cross contributions will aid these boys, out come the pennies, dimes, and bills.

Two thousand dollars was asked of the Navajo reservation by Red Cross officials. This amount was split up among the various districts and, to date, each has raised far more than the sum assigned it. One of the poorer districts, asked to collect \$75, responded with \$135. One man handed the Trader's wife thirty cents and said grandly, "Credit me with ten cents, my wife with ten cents, and my boy with ten cents!" Another old man pulled out his purse and gave it to the collector, saying, "Count it. Tell me what I give." It contained two dollars and five cents. Smilingly he accepted back the purse and

the nickel. A shabby young fellow motioned the Trader out of earshot of his friends. "How little can a man give?" he asked. When told that any sum was acceptable, he pulled seven pennies from his pocket. "I can give all these if I don't write to my girl this week!" he said. At a District Farm Association meeting one English-speaking Indian asked, "How would it be for a bunch of us Navajos each to give a sheep to help lick those Japs?"

Many, lacking money, have brought in corn, meat, and rugs which were sold to the traders and the money given to the Red Cross. At the time this is written, the two thousand dollars has swelled to the three thousand mark, and the hard-earned money is still trickling in. Henry Taliman, former Tribal Councilman and World War veteran, has collected three hundred dollars from Indians in the vicinity of his home. Most Government employees and the well-to-do sheep and cattle men have invested largely in Government bonds. Many use as much as twenty per cent of their income this way. One old couple, "deep reservation" and without a word of English, rode into Central Agency in their little covered wagon and mutely offered the savings of a lifetime, two hundred dollars in a rusted tomato can, the earth in which it had been hidden still adhering to its sides, "to help win the fight." Chee Dodge, grand old man of the Navajo Nation, has invested twenty thousand dollars in Government bonds, besides having given generously to the Red Cross.

As in the old days of Navajo warfare, soldiers are prepared for combat in typical Navajo fashion. When the time for a boy's departure to an Army camp is imminent, his family arranges with the Clan Medicine Man to hold a "Sing" for him, for which he is paid in money, sheep,



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turquoise and silver jewelry, or rugs. He usually arrives in the evening and engages in prayer until all relatives, guests, friends, and neighbors for a great distance around begin to arrive at daybreak for the ceremony, bringing food for three meals. After the morning meal is finished, sacred prayer songs are chanted. When the singing ceases, a Hopi prayer basket is brought in and placed in the center of the hogan on a strip of new cloth, purchased for the occasion. This the Medicine Man fills with water which has been blessed for the purpose, and the boy's head and finally his entire body is bathed in it, with incantations by the Medicine Man to insure its strengthening and protective powers. The assembled Indians then prepare and eat another meal, and the afternoon is given to further singing of sacred songs. These are interrupted only by the third meal, late in the evening.

At dawn of the second day, yellow corn pollen, Navajo symbol of life, is sprinkled on the boy's head and on his tongue, and he is blessed again by the Medicine Man and bidden a solemn farewell by his friends before they leave. During the next four days he must stay in or near the hogan, since the *chindes*, or devils, may destroy the good spell if they get a chance at him.

When he receives his uniform at Camp and sends his civilian clothes home, a second ceremony takes place. The clothing, unwashed, for it must be just as he took it off, is placed in a long box, each article in order, hat above shirt, shirt tucked into trousers, and shoes beneath, with socks in them. After a sacred song, the clothes are sprinkled with pollen, and the Medicine Man asks the Great Spirit to preserve the boy and bring him back

to wear the garments again, to bring him victory and confound his enemies. After four days, the clothing is rolled up carefully and stored away in a bag until the owner shall return.

Almost every English-speaking Navajo woman is enrolled in the American Women's Voluntary Service. Many are committee women or chairmen, and all who are near enough the Agencies to attend are taking courses in First Aid, Nutrition, Home Nursing, etc., and engaging in other activities sponsored by the AWVS and the Red Cross.

In January 1942, the Navajo Tribal Council, meeting at Window Rock, Arizona, once again affirmed the loyalty of the Navajo people to the United States Government and requested the establishment of training camps for non-English-speaking men and boys who have heretofore been rejected by draft officials. For these hundred-per-centers, in whose veins runs pure and unadulterated the blood and fire of early America, are now as fiercely loyal to "Washington" as they once were rebellious.

Indians off the reservation, who have no radios or newspapers, ask eagerly for news when they come to the Agency. All feel confident of victory. "Us Americans never been whipped yet!" a Navajo school boy asserted proudly. "They didn't do it before, and they can't do it again!"

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*Estelle Webb Thomas is the wife of the Farm Supervisor of District 14 on the Navajo Reservation. Her stories of Indian and Mexican children have appeared in Story Parade and other juvenile magazines.*

## SO YOU'RE IN THE UNITED STATES

WAINO NYLAND

WHEN our family, fresh from Finland, went to that "greatest mining camp on earth," Butte, Montana, in the early part of this century, Wilhelm was eight and I was six and a half.

With shiny eager faces, snug mössas on our heads, and dressed in heavy comfortable homespun, we started to the schoolhouse with Mother.

The assistant principal, a quick dark-eyed woman, took charge of us and Mother left. In the office she swiftly began filling out cards.

"Of course the name Wilhelm is not used in this country," she said, her enunciation crisp and precise. "You are in the United States now and will want to adopt the customs of this country. Here your name is William. Unless your parents object, I'll record it that way in our office."

We said nothing. We knew we had entrusted our fate to the American educational system.

The assistant principal, though, was stumped by my name. I was called by the diminutive Weinor at home, but my full Christian name was Väinämöinen.

"Why did your mother give you such a name?" she asked, as I spelled it for her.

I hesitated. With my limited command of English I felt inadequate to explain the significance of this well-known name in my native land. But Wilhelm was ready.

"Yah," he said, "da name is important where ve come from. It is da name of a god, da son of da vind and of da virgin

air. He vas a big, strong man. He captured bears. He invented da sacred harp of fishbones. He drove away da plague and knew all about magic. He vas a great help to man."

"Well, now—how interesting!" she said, expressing surprise as well as a little scorn for this bit of Finnish folklore. "But your brother can't grow up in the United States with such a name. It would be too inconvenient and embarrassing for him. We must find a good American equivalent."

She mused over it. "At least we can change the v to w. You Scandinavians make no distinction between the two letters anyway."

"Dat iss not double-u," said Wilhelm stoutly. "Dat is double v, two v's—like in my name."

"That is a double-u in this country, William," she snapped with a finality that tolerated no argument.

Wilhelm glared at her but held his peace. I too felt resentful. A v is a v, we reasoned; a w is two v's. Anybody who says it is a double-u is just contrary.

She poised her pencil for slashing. "I can't make head or tail of this name. Maybe we could eliminate the second half."

She drew a line through möinen. "That looks a little better."

I was beginning to feel insignificant, as well as fearful of what this peremptory bisecting might lead to. My high-strung brother started to protest, but he was silenced by the flourish of her pencil in

preparation for further philological surgery.

"We can drop those dots from the a and the o—more foolishness in your alphabet. Now, let's see what we have—Wai-na. That's much better, but it still doesn't mean anything in English."

She scribbled a few variations of this elliptical and contorted version of the hallowed Finnish name. "I have it! Wayne! That's a good American name for you, young man. It has history back of it, too. Some day when you study United States history you will learn all about Mad Anthony Wayne and you'll be proud to be an American."

So the two of us were ushered to our rooms, rechristened without benefit of clergy. Of course, my brother's new name, William, was to prove even more transitory than Wilhelm. Before the end of the day he would be Bill, and later Wild Bill; still later, in labor circles, Bill, the Wild Swede.

But the day had only begun. I found myself in a large room with about seventy pupils and three teachers. I was assigned to the only vacant seat.

The teacher stood before us with flash cards containing such words as "dog," "cat," "rat," "mice," and so on.

These I found quite easy, for I had already shown considerable facility in language, and in the long travels of our family for the past six months (from New York to Michigan, back to New York, then to Montana) my brother and I had made a game of reading the never-ending advertisements strewn across the continent. As a result I had a large but peculiar reading vocabulary made up largely of such expressions as "lumbago," "kidney trouble," "Swamp Root," "back ache," "Centennial around the world," "Castoria for constipation," "Sapolio, the magic cleaner," "Budweiser is a friend of mine," "Oxomulsion for pneumonia,"

"Herpicide, the only remedy known to stop the hair falling out," and "Nothing is too good for the American people—drink Anheuser Busch."

Before the lesson was over, I had gained the teacher's approval for my reading ability.

Then I began studying the books given me, eager for greater intellectual attainments.

Suddenly a pencil jabbed into my back. I pulled away, but again the pencil dug into me. I turned around. A boy several years older than I, with a sallow face and large, loose-jointed jaw, was grinning.

"Ol'country clothes, huh," he said and ran his pencil across my back.

I tried to disregard him, but the pencil again jabbed me, this time so viciously I almost cried out.

"Ain't yer goin' to speak?" he asked.

I looked for help. The teachers were all busy.

"What's yer name, Satunge?" he continued.

I recoiled. At that age the devil's name sounded more fearsome to me than the Lord's, especially when spoken in corrupt Swedish.

"What—ain't yer got a name?" He jabbed me to emphasize his question. "Tell me yer name before I punch yuh."

"Wayne," I said, thankful that the teacher had rechristened me.

He seemed puzzled by its good American sound.

"Just the same, yer from the ol' country. I heard yuh recitin'. Yuh can't speak good English."

"Charlie," the teacher warned, "stop your talking."

Though the conversation ended, he continued to jab me. I squirmed, I wiggled, I turned around, I jumped, but there was no let-up. The room was noisy and the teachers were too busy to notice this sadistic orgy. I felt like a mouse at

the mercy of a cat: there might be no relief till I were dead.

Recess finally came. But on the school grounds the tormenting took another turn. Charlie got several others to join him, and they danced around me, shouting, "Ol'-country clothes—ol'-country clothes."

My jacket, which was buttoned right up to my chin, gave them the greatest amusement. They tugged at it and tried to unbutton it. My mössa was knocked off my head, but I recovered it and tucked it inside my jacket.

For fifteen minutes they pestered me. Not a teacher could be seen at any of the windows of the big three-story structure, which had disgorged its hundreds of pupils who were now swarming over the school grounds and the streets, left to their own devices, shouting and screaming, throwing rocks at wagons, booing peddlers, and raising Cain in general. By the time recess ended I was exhausted. I learned that Charlie was called Chicken Rose and that he could "lick" any one in kindergarten or first grade.

Back in the room I faced the prospect of more pencil-jabbing. My back was already a mass of welts. As I looked at the clock, my heart sank: one hour yet until dismissal time.

Chicken Rose was not long in starting to work on me. After a few hard jabs, I cried out.

"What's the matter, Wayne?" the teacher asked as she came down the aisle to me.

I burst into tears, but I was reluctant to explain my difficulties for fear of later retaliation by my enemy. After considerable urging, she got the whole story out of me.

She became quite angry, reprimanded Chicken Rose, shook him and pulled his hair.

He was quiet for about five minutes; then he leaned forward and hissed in my

ear: "Squealer—I'll get yuh fer this."

He no longer jabbed me, but every minute he would hiss: "Squealer—I'll get yuh after school."

I now had a new dread, for I was not at all pugilistically inclined; even if I had been, I would have been no match for him.

"Squealer—I'm gonna punch yer block off."

The continued repetition of "squealer" had a hypnotic effect. My wits left me completely. When we read the flash cards again, I could not follow the recitation. When the teacher called on me to read, I mumbled that I couldn't.

"Oh, surely you know this word, Wayne. You read it last time quite easily. Look at it. Spell out the letters: d—o—g."

"Dog," I answered, but my mind reverted instantly to my troubles.

At dismissal we were lined up in marching order in the hall. My nemesis let me know he was behind me with a kick on the shins. "Squealer, we're fightin' it out."

I looked imploringly for help, but the teachers were stationed along the hall, looking stern and forbidding. The dark-eyed assistant principal had appeared again and stood in the center of the hall, immobilized like the big pillar behind her. Dismissing—our only supervised group activity of the day—was conducted with military formality. When the rows of pupils from four rooms became quiet, the assistant principal clapped her hands and shouted, "March!"

One of the teachers tapped the floor with a yardstick: "Left, left, left-right-left."

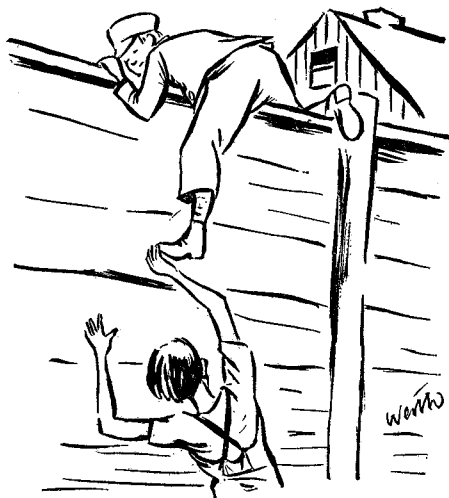
We milled toward the doorway, gradually catching the rhythm of the chant and the thump of the yardstick.

At the door I leaped like a rabbit and bounded down the walk with Chicken Rose just behind me.

"Turn 'roun an' fight, yuh coward!"  
As he gained on me, I took to the street.

On I raced, but I could see he would overtake me if I kept on a straightaway.

I dashed between a couple of houses, into a backyard, and scrambled up a fence. Chicken clutched me by the tail of my jacket, but I kicked him loose.



I tumbled down the other side, expecting to land in a dusty alley. Instead I found myself floundering in stinking mud, formed by sewage running from the houses—a condition prevalent throughout most of Butte at that time. My *mössa* fell under me. I retrieved it, picked myself up, and sloshed down the alley.

Though the mud had ruined my clothes, it was my means of escape, for Chicken Rose was content to perch on the fence and shout: "I'll get yuh this afternoon!"

I reached home, unrecognizable.

"Don't come in," Mother cried. "Oh—Weinor, what's happened! Oh, dear—oh, dear—"

She took me around to the back porch, where we struggled to get my mud-soaked clothes off. Then she got pans of water

and started to mop the muck off my hands, face, and hair.

Wilhelm came home late, his face scratched, but otherwise intact. He said the boys had pestered him too about his clothes, but he had given two of them something to remember him by. "And I'll get the others this afternoon," he affirmed.

We did not go to school that afternoon. Instead Father and Mother borrowed some money from Uncle Emil, took us uptown, and outfitted us in new Buster Brown suits at \$6.95 each.

The suits were neat and trim and stiff. Father fingered the cloth disdainfully. "Mostly cotton, and won't last half as long as your old clothes. But we'll dress like the Americans do, and, by *allsmägtige* Gud, we'll fight like the Americans do!"

American clothes did not solve my main problem, though. I still had to face the ordeal of sitting in front of Chicken Rose. I saw no escape except to stay away from school; yet such a course would land me in the "hookey" school. My cousins had already pointed it out to me, an isolated building, surrounded by a high board fence, far out on the sagebrush flat. There was also a truant officer who had nothing to do but round up boys who played hookey.

I passed a fitful night, dreaming of Chicken Rose, and wakening Mother several times with my cries.

In the morning my mind was made up. I would not go to school. To be in the hands of the truant officer was preferable to being at the mercy of Chicken Rose.

When Mother saw me putting on my old clothes instead of my new Buster Brown suit, she exclaimed, "Weinor, what're you doing? Your new suit is right there on the back of the chair."

"I'm not going to school," I said.

Mother gasped.

"You have to go to school. It's the law of this country."

"I don't care. I'm not going."

"But they'll send you to the 'hookey' school."

"I don't care. That's where I want to go."

She was too astonished to speak.

"What sort of nonsense is this, Weiner? I don't understand you."

"I'm not going back to sit in front of Chicken Rose."

"Oh—is that all that's worrying you? Surely we can get your seat changed."

"No, there isn't a vacant seat in the room. Nobody will change with me. I've thought it all out. I'm going to the hookey school."

As Mother saw my immovable determination, she wakened Father, who had come home from night shift only a few hours before.

Father, too, was not angry with me. He saw my stubbornness was something a paddling wouldn't correct. He asked for a complete account of the previous day. Then he decided to go to school with me.

Father, Wilhelm, and I went to school early; it was not seemly in those days for parents to be seen conferring with teachers about their children's problems.

"Good morning, Wayne," my teacher greeted me. "And I suppose this is your father?"

I nodded my head.

"How do you do, Mr. Nyland. I'm glad you have come to visit our school."

As Father fumbled for a way to broach our weighty problem, she continued: "Your son Wayne made a very fine showing yesterday. His reading ability is exceedingly good for a boy of his age. In fact, he is so good we have decided to promote him to the first grade." She turned to me. "You are to go right into

the first grade this morning. Miss Birch will be your teacher."

I could hardly believe what I heard, but I knew that whatever these decisive teachers said, they meant. Father was even more astounded than I.

"Was there something you came to see me about?" the teacher asked as Father stood speechless.

He shook his head. "No. I jüst came to see da school, and see if my boy vas getting along all right. T'ank you, very much; I feel very happy dat my boy iss doing good vork. Yah, very happy. I t'ink I go now. Good-bye."

In the first-grade room, I was given a seat by a window—no one could attack me from that side; a freckle-faced girl with pigtailed sat in back of me—no nonsense from her; and there was a vacant seat in front of me. I could see Wilhelm in 1-A, smiling at me. My joy was replete.

From my place at the window I could look at the billboards along an abandoned mine dump. The old familiar figures smiled encouragingly: Sir Walter Raleigh, Prince Albert, Lydia Pinkham, Milo, Bull Durham, Jack Johnson, Barnum and Bailey. On the side of the corner saloon was an advertisement I hadn't seen before, a picture of a spirited, square-shouldered gentleman. I read the message carefully, in my own way: "Men—how about dat punch? For Wim, Wigor and Witality, try Mormon Bishops' Pills. Used by leaders of the Mormon Church for fifty years."

Yesterday I had learned my v's and double-u's. Today I would try for "dat punch," by the allsmächtige Gud!

Waino Nyland is a member of the faculty of the College of Engineering at the University of Colorado.

Kurt Werth is the illustrator.



## • News Notes •

COMMON GROUND will remain a quarterly, at least for another year, as a result of returns on the questionnaire distributed to its readers. In an analysis of the first 300 replies received (typical of subsequent trends), the editors found 165 voting for a quarterly, 73 for a bi-monthly, 43 for a monthly, and 19 to whom the frequency of publication was immaterial.

Of this group, 299 said the magazine had been interesting and useful, one that it had not. It was related to the occupation or special interest of 166; general readers numbered 134. While business executives, engineers, professional men, housewives, and a wide miscellany of other readers were represented, almost two-thirds of the returns came from moulders of public opinion—social and organizational workers, teachers, writers, clergymen, and librarians, who used the magazine extensively in their work. In the age groupings, 10 were under 25; 124 from 25-45; 126 from 45-65; and 35 over 65.

Old-stock readers numbered 121; 51 were foreign-born; 76 were second generation; 39 were third generation. To the question, "Do you think of yourself as having any particular nationality background?" 152 said No or gave no answer. Of the rest, 53 identified it as British (English, Scottish, Welsh); 17 as German; 14 as Jewish; 9 each as Swedish and Czech; and so on, in decreasing numbers.

Autobiographical material is most popular, with stories, photographs, and articles next in order; the Immigrant Press rates highest among the Departments, with the Bookshelf a close second. The Recommended Reading lists have been used to good effect by 158 readers. 255 pass the magazine on to others—friends, families, classes, groups—and 234 keep

or try to get copies returned to save for future reference.

To 207 of the 300, the war has definitely increased the importance of the publication—because "the war created a war front, but not unity"; because "it lessens hysteria"; because COMMON GROUND "can keep sanity in respect to not hating Japanese and Germans in the United States." "I flared up," writes an Oregon reader, "when I saw three articles by Japanese in the last issue. The Atlantic Coast cannot know our years of experience on this—but I did read them—and cooled down again. The articles were good."

It was to be expected that those responding to the questionnaire would be persons who like the magazine. The significant thing about the returns is the high degree of enthusiasm and, even more important, the many ways the publication is being used and the number of people reached by a single copy. "Being a Southerner, my viewpoint has been broadened, my sympathies deepened through reading COMMON GROUND," writes a Southern newspaper editor. "A panel discussion last year based on 'The Anatomy of Prejudice' aroused so much interest in the Mothers' Association that this group is now studying Christian Democracy. I am teaching the course, which will run through 20 lessons, and am drawing heavily on material from COMMON GROUND," reports a housewife from Pennsylvania. A New Jersey teacher says: "As an individual it has widened my appreciation of the peoples who make up America. As a teacher it has given me an interesting 'handbook of Americanism' to place in the hands of students who really want a country where brotherhood exists but don't know enough about groups who

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differ from them. We have used it as an aid to speech students writing orations on Americanism, Seniors writing essays on racial contributions to America, Juniors creating a commencement play in which South American scenes were needed, etc." A Judge of the Superior Court in California writes: "I have come to know better the foreign-born who come before me as witnesses, jurors, parties to litigation, and applicants for naturalization. I can better understand their viewpoint and process of reasoning." And "I have learned what 'national unity' in this United States implies," writes a Swedish immigrant in California. "It informs me of matters where I am ignorant (and where one shouldn't be, as a citizen of this great nation). It has stimulated my inborn interest in people and peoples and also naturally widened my sympathy. Your questionnaire has the spirit of COMMON GROUND; you care for us wherever and whoever we are. Wars would not be, with that spirit abroad. I wish your publication (and ours) all the success it deserves."

The New York City Emergency Committee for the Foreign-Born and National Defense is a co-ordinating committee of representatives of 22 social agencies in the city. For the sake of national unity the Committee is concerned that the foreign-born should not be an isolated group but be participating in the defense program along with older Americans in community efforts.

As an advisory committee to the CBO, it helped organize a meeting of nationality leaders to explain the civilian defense program and opportunities for participation by nationality groups. Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke on "American Unity and National Defense." It has worked with the foreign-language press on the publication of instructions regarding air-raid protection and information regarding the

Certificate of Identification Program for aliens; it provided over 200 volunteers to interview aliens and help in the Identification Program; it has distributed information on opportunities open to non-citizens and those closed to them, and has investigated the reasons for such rulings and to some extent succeeded in modifying them; and it is making neighborhood contacts to encourage local defense councils and other community efforts to include the foreign-born in their planning groups.

To build solidarity among Americans of Slavic extraction and co-ordinate their activities in an intensified war effort, over 2,000 delegates attended the American Slav Congress in Detroit, April 25 and 26. They represented 15,000,000 Americans of Slavic birth or descent, who constitute more than half the workers in America's war essential industries. For the first time in America, men and women of 13 Slavic nationalities—Croat and Serb, Pole and Russian, Slovene and Slovak, etc.—with centuries of traditional Old-World feuds behind them, met together to decide on a common policy for the safeguarding of a common future. Paul V. McNutt delivered the main address as spokesman for the Government.

The Loyalty Committee of Victims of Nazi and Fascist Oppression, 11 West 42nd Street, New York City, has launched a vigorous campaign for funds to purchase a fighter plane to be presented to the Government. Many of its members and supporters are technically "enemy aliens."

Frank Mlakar, assistant editor of COMMON GROUND, was inducted into the Army on April 9. Assigned to the Medical Corps, he is now at Camp Lee, Virginia.

## . Organizations and Their Work .

### THE JOHN ANISFIELD FOUNDATION

ANN ELIZA KELLER

To help bring about better racial relations in the contemporary world, The John Anisfield Foundation was established in 1934 to award \$1,000 annually to a study based on scientific research in this field. It was created by Edith Anisfield Wolf in memory of her father, for over twenty years a Cleveland manufacturer, outstanding citizen, and philanthropist.

John Anisfield, a graduate of the gymnasium in his native city in Austria, came to this country on his own, at the age of 14, practically penniless. He soon found employment and sent a large part of his meager earnings to assist his parents and brothers and sisters still living abroad. Finally, through perseverance and sacrifice, he brought them to America to join him. The vision of freedom and happiness that had inspired him to leave home and family and find a new way of life was now reality, and the immigrant boy was an American citizen imbued with America's finest loyalties and highest ideals. The Foundation continues his deep interest in the country of his adoption.

This year, encouraged by the wide public interest in the first award, Mrs. Wolf set up a second, to be given annually to a work in the creative field, under which plays, novels, poems, essays, biography, or autobiography are eligible. The awards are made under the sponsorship of the Saturday Review of Literature, and the committee of judges consists of Henry Pratt Fairchild, Professor of Sociology in New York University; Henry Seidel Canby, Contributing Editor of the Saturday Review; and Donald

Young of the Social Science Research Council, Chairman of the Committee.

The winners to date have been:

- 1935—Harold Gosnell, *Negro Politicians*
- 1936—Julian S. Huxley and A. C. Haddon, *We Europeans*
- 1937—Elin L. Anderson, *We Americans*
- 1938—Charles S. Johnson, *The Negro College Graduate*
- 1939—E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States*
- 1940—Louis Adamic, *From Many Lands*
- 1941—James G. Leyburn, *The Haitian People*  
Leopold Infeld, *Quest*

Harold Gosnell's *Negro Politicians: The Rise of Negro Politics in Chicago*, first winner of the award, shows the struggle of Negroes to advance their status by political methods. Negro appointees to political positions, he points out, have a difficult role to play. They must live in the white world which controls most of the appointing agencies; and they must live in the Negro world which supports their claims for the positions they hold. The successful job-holder must find his way about in both worlds.

Julian Huxley and A. C. Haddon, in *We Europeans*, stress the fact that race, in the sense of any body of people claiming common biological characteristics and descent, is an imaginary concept, though mental traits probably persist and differ from one ethnic group to another.

Elin L. Anderson, a welfare worker in

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Burlington, Vermont, was 1937 winner of the award with *We Americans: A study of cleavage in an American city*. She feels that "old American culture must be rubbed up and polished off against the other fellow."

Charles S. Johnson, author of *The Negro College Graduate*, 1938, analyzes the progress of Negroes in formal higher education and points to the achievement of Negro college graduates in spite of discrimination against them which limits their participation in community life; and E. Franklin Frazier of Howard University, 1939 winner for his book *The Negro Family in the United States*, deals with the advance of the American Negro and his family group from slavery days to the present.

*From Many Lands*, by Louis Adamic, a best seller in 1940, is the first of a series of independent books by this author on racial relations. Mr. Adamic presents Americans of many backgrounds—Armenian, Greek, Italian, Croatian, Jewish, Mexican, Japanese—functioning generally well in our democracy and planning to pull together for America. Of special importance in the light of subsequent events is the section on the Nisei, second-generation Japanese Americans, presented through the story of a college graduate unable to find his place in America socially or industrially, craving American associates and the right to make his living in the American way. The boy feels the Japanese American college graduate is forced into diplomatic service for Japan when he wants to do this work for America, and claims all remain loyal to America at heart. Mr. Adamic's thesis is that such differences as exist among people are due mainly to different environment, history, and experience. When they meet in the same environment and have a common life, they tend to become alike.

The 1941 winner of the \$1,000 award

in the scholarly field is James G. Leyburn of Yale University, with a book important not only in racial relations but in questions of hemispheric solidarity—*The Haitian People*, a comprehensive, penetrating, and well-documented study. Dr. Leopold Infeld, Polish-born physicist, is the first recipient of the new award of \$1,000 in the creative field, for his autobiography *Quest: The Evolution of a Scientist*. Here the relations of the intellectual Jew to the Gentile world are discussed with deep perception and effectiveness. Dr. Infeld, already known for *The Evolution of Physics*, which he wrote with Dr. Albert Einstein, has been a Professor of Mathematics at the University of Toronto since 1938.

In 1938 and 1939, grants-in-aid of \$500 each—now replaced by the \$1,000 award in the creative field—were made to studies then in progress: in 1938 to Guy B. Johnson, Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of North Carolina for a study of the Croatan Indians of Robeson County, North Carolina, and their relations with whites and Negroes; and in 1939 to Ralph J. Bunche of the Department of Political Science, Howard University, Washington, D.C., for a study of non-Europeans in South Africa—their political, economic, and social status.

The subjects covered by the awards to date demonstrate both the need and the opportunities for study in the field of racial relations. They prove also that the inspiration of John Anisfield, the Austrian boy who came to these shores and held onto his vision and love for the American idea, has set in motion a project of importance to a post-war world and its rehabilitation.

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Of English and Swiss ancestry, Ann Eliza Keller lives in Cleveland, Ohio.

## • Schools and Teachers •

### YOUNG "GOOD NEIGHBORS"

KARA HUNSUCKER

*Buenos días* has replaced the traditional "good morning" of Texas school children, who now begin learning Spanish in the third grade. Enthusiastic and excited over their ability to understand and speak simple Spanish, these eight-year-olds are potentially great promoters of the Good-Neighbor policy. From childhood they are being taught to understand and admire the Latin Americans.

Last spring the Texas Legislature appropriated \$70,000 to begin the teaching of Spanish in the elementary grades. Although the State did adopt a series of texts, in Lubbock, under the direction of Superintendent W. B. Irvin, the teachers prepared their own series, *Amigos Panamericanos*, five books which will eventually be used from the third to the seventh grades.

Upon completion of the five-year study, with twenty-minute periods for the language each day, the child will have learned approximately 2,000 words. Because each word has been repeated again and again, he can speak, read, write, and comprehend simple Spanish, though he knows nothing of Spanish grammar; a child cannot learn grammatical principles of a foreign language until he has received a basic foundation in his own.

Youngsters do not begin to read the language until they have had much practice in pronunciation and conversation. Flexibility of the speech organs of the young child enables him to develop perfect pronunciation easily, and his ear is trained to distinguish Spanish sounds before he sees the printed word.

The Lubbock program, although still in the experimental stage, is a broad one. In music and physical education classes, students learn rhythms and folk dances of Spanish America. In art they make vivid drawings of Mexican scenes. Vocabulary notebooks with pictures or sketches illustrating Spanish words are aids in creating interest. A Pan-American Day fiesta held each year on April 14 features a play with a Latin American background, native costumes, dances, and songs.

Classrooms present an atmosphere in harmony with the course. Bulletin boards are decorated with the children's handiwork—brightly-colored posters, scrap-book covers and charts, depicting the Latin American motif. Pictures show rooms in houses, different kinds of foods, and types of clothing. Pupils readily name in Spanish such details as the articles of furniture and their colors, and the foods of everyday menus. They follow the story of "The Three Bears" in simple Spanish sentences printed on nine large illustrated posters. And even first-grade youngsters prepare for their future study of Spanish by making colorful tropical fruits of papier-mache.

In the fourth-grade group, which began learning Spanish in January 1940, students alternate in conducting the class. The presiding child gives a Spanish command, often three-fold in nature: "Run to the teacher's desk, jump to the window, and close the door." The words come easily, in rapid succession, and at once students raise their hands for the privilege of carrying out the commands. Or the

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leader requests, "Cante 'Donde o donde,' " and a nine-year old breaks into a slightly off-key version of "Where, O Where Has My Little Dog Gone?"

In the seventh grade these children will study the fifth book in the *Amigos Panamericanos* series, which has a setting in Mexico itself. In later life they will thus not have to stumble over such words as Popocatepetl, Xochimilco, Tepozatlán, and Ixtacihuatl, or wonder at the meanings of *las posadas*, "pyramid of the moon," or reasons for various fiesta celebrations.

Psychologists tell us that prejudices and aversions in adult life may often be traced to irrational ready-made attitudes absorbed in childhood. But if American school children become familiar with the culture of the Latin American peoples, they will almost inevitably develop an understand-

ing and appreciation of those who live south of the Rio Grande. Language, of course, is only one medium by which we may strengthen hemispheric ties. To understand the characteristics and life of our neighbors to the south, Americans must also know their background, culture, customs, and the geography of their countries. Grade-school children can learn these things as well as the language. And later there must be contacts through travel.

With this kind of careful and unbiased study, we can convince our neighbors of the sincerity of our efforts to form a permanent hemispheric peace.

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*Kara Hunsucker is a Senior at Texas Technological College, majoring in Spanish and journalism.*

## CONTEST AWARDS

Winner of the \$50 first prize in the college division in COMMON GROUND's recent contest is Asami Kawachi, Los Angeles City College, Los Angeles, California, for a biographical essay, "Strangers' Rice"; while Edith Handleman, Penn Yan Academy, Penn Yan, New York, carries off first honors in the secondary school division with "We Are America," the story of the coming of her family to this country. Both essays appear in this issue.

In the college division, honorable mention and a subscription to COMMON GROUND went to Lois Wells and Virginia Rock of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Ruby Ball, Berea College, Berea, Kentucky; Marcharelle Brice, Lindenwood College for Women, St.

Charles, Missouri; and Robert McNitt, Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Illinois; in the secondary school division, to Carroll B. Howe, Newark Academy, Newark, New Jersey; Lawrence Adkins, Abraham Lincoln High School, Council Bluffs, Iowa; Marie Penko, Collinwood High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Helen Vannberg, Escanaba Senior High School, Escanaba, Michigan; and Joseph Pardek, George Rogers Clark School, Whiting, Indiana.

Interest in COMMON GROUND's first school contest was gratifyingly widespread, entries coming in from 24 states, from Texas to Montana and California to New England.



## • From the Immigrant and Negro Press •

### AMERICA'S YOUNGEST NEWSPAPER

FROM Manzanar in Owens Valley, California, one of the first reception centers for Japanese evacuees, comes a lively mimeographed newspaper called the Manzanar Free Press. Printed exclusively in English, manned entirely by Japanese Americans, the paper announces in its first issue of April 11: "We don't have a 'policy.' . . . Politics are out! We don't have to worry about what our advertisers think! We will have no circulation department worries. This, to a newspaper man or woman, is plain Utopia. We should be able to devote all our creative efforts to making this sheet one of the liveliest ever published in the world. And one of the most democratic. . . ."

"We are the principals in an experiment unparalleled in the annals of American democracy. Much of our progress lies through uncharted ground. We can't give all the answers. We won't know the answers until we come to them.

"We'll be providing the answers that a world and the American public especially are asking. Democracy is being tested of its mettle right here. By our actions and attitudes we shall be responsible—responsible to this and future generations of free men. Truth must be the keystone of this community. . . ."

Population statistics announced by the Free Press show that in the first three weeks of the evacuation program Manzanar "mushroomed into the bonanza town of '42," boasting on April 11 a population of 3,302, "the largest California city east of the Sierras." New caravans of arrivals toward the end of the month upped this figure to 7,181 on April 29. The issue of April 25, dedicated to the

new arrivals, ran a large map of the community and a word of welcome from Harry L. Black, assistant camp manager:

"We make no apologies for the more or less primitive living conditions at Camp Manzanar. Time will report that we met these problems with the same resolution which characterized the pioneer settlers. By our efforts and our mutual co-operation we expect to develop here a model community.

"We invite the newcomers to join in the big task of further development which lies ahead. Our civic growth, the improvement of our physical accommodations, the means of meeting our social, educational, and spiritual needs are limited only by the co-operative imagination and energy we are willing and able to devote to the job."

"All manner of names" adorn the barracks, reports the paper. "Apt titles like Dusty Inn, Manzanar Mansion, and Jerks' Jernt stand with the more wistful or pretentious Waldorf Astoria and Hotel Mt. Whitney. As for La Casa de Paz (House of Peace, you of the north), we admit it's clever. . . . But we're still looking for the sign that reads: 'Through these portals pass the most beautiful sweaters in the world.'"

Great excitement occurred over the first wedding—the entire camp turning out for the occasion. Similar interest was manifested in Manzanar's "first bouncing baby boy," born April 16 in the emergency hospital. "The slender young father, waiter in Mess 12, was beaming excitedly as he dished out extra helpings of hash. Disappointing those local residents who had hoped the first baby would be called

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Owens, the child's name is to be Kenji. A contribution box had been placed in the canteen to receive donations for the expected first baby."

With an illustrative cartoon heading the item, the April 15 issue warned: "The traditional Japanese zeal for cleanliness is reaching a feverish pitch as many Issei, unaccustomed to the spraying showers, are reportedly using the laundry tubs for bathing purposes. This works an unaccustomed hardship on the tubs and should be stopped immediately as damage to tubs may possibly ensue."

In each block, heavy and interested voting took place to select three candidates from whom the Camp Manager

chose one block leader and an alternate to have general charge of the welfare of their sections. In many cases this was the first experience of the Issei with the democratic ballot. Athletics, musical activities, and pre-school recreational centers have been organized; registration for vocational classification has taken place; and a large size experiment with guayule raising is under way to help solve the rubber shortage and aid in national defense.

An appeal is made for books and magazines for the proposed Manzanar library. Address any contributions to Mr. Robert Brown, Public Relations Representative, Owens Valley Reception Center, Manzanar, California.

## SHALL THE FOREIGN-LANGUAGE PRESS BE SILENCED?

*(Condensed from an editorial by Ferenc Göndör, editor of Az Ember, Hungarian-language weekly, New York City, April 21, 1942.)*

WE could not and never would want to be anything other than Americans. The fact that we are expressing our love for this adopted country in the Magyar language does not contradict our patriotism, nor does it detract from our loyalty or our readiness to execute the duties our conscience imposes upon us.

Suggestions have been made demanding the suppression of the foreign-language press for the duration; others adopt a less drastic position advocating only a rigorous control. If we felt that by going out of existence the foreign-language press would serve the cause of the United Nations, we would be the first to throw our pen into the dust-bin and wait with sacrificial fidelity for our great President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, to order us to more active duty in the service of our country. We would discard this little

paper without the slightest regret, announcing the total elimination of our Hungarian voice. It is more important to see the United States happy and glorious than to see this tiny foreign-language paper continue its existence.

Yet I ask for understanding and just treatment for the foreign-language press, not in the interest of that press, but in the interest of American victory. A great majority is serving America faithfully and with enthusiasm. In the Hungarian-language field, as well as that of the other language groups, the majority feel American, believe in America, encourage their readers in the American spirit if not in its language.

No one can hate the criminal enemies of America more than we. In this we often outdo our American-born brothers. Many of us have suffered under the pirate flags of Nazism and fascism. We feel more intensely than any American-born person what it means to live under the American flag, what joy it imparts to its adherents, what it means to be a member of a nation

secure from persecution, hatred, and oppression, what the difference is between the United States and other parts of the world.

We, the erstwhile slaves and the oppressed—the foreign-born Americans—willingly offer our lives that we may continue to enjoy the benefits this nation has heaped upon us with endless kindness and incredible unselfishness. We know exactly why our adopted country is waging her great war of liberation; we know the enemy intimately; we fought the oppressors in Europe and they cannot now mislead or poison us with their well-developed propaganda. We can handle them on our own language fields. We have already pointed out the traitors in our midst and revealed the fifth columnists who have sneaked into this country and sought refuge here. We ask no clemency for the Judases of the alien-language press or the

English-language press, and we gladly greet any death sentence that weakens the battalions of our internal enemies.

But we ask the authorities not to silence the loyal and patriotic foreign-language press. If we can talk to the reader in his mother tongue, we can keep much more alive the justice of our cause, a sense of gratitude, and a fighting spirit. We can also counteract the enemy propaganda he is apt to hear, if we offer him the truth in his own language. We can convince him—should he need convincing—that his people in the Old World can only hope to be happy again if the United Nations—and especially our own country—frees them from Hitler's deadly embrace and restores their self-respect and liberties.

In the columns of the loyal foreign-language papers, the fighting divisions of America are marching into battle as they are marching on the various fronts all over the globe.

## FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE LOYAL ITALIAN PRESS

IN the April 16 issue of *Nazioni Unite* (The United Nations), Italian-language weekly of the Mazzini Society published in New York City, appeared a copy of a telegram sent to President Roosevelt by the Board of Directors of the Mazzini Society, nation-wide organization of liberal Italian Americans and Italian anti-fascist refugees:

"An Associated Press dispatch appearing in the New York Times of Monday, April 13th, announces the possible suppression of the Italian-language press in the United States. We cannot believe that such a step is being seriously considered since its only effect would be to isolate large numbers of Italian Americans from the war effort of the United States. Millions of Italians in Italy, North America,

and South America would immediately interpret this move as proof that the United States is waging war against the Italian people rather than against the Fascist regime. To hit large masses in order to reach a few false shepherds would be a needless violence and a blow to the cause for which we stand. We, who have been for twenty years at war with fascism, pledge our militant support to any campaign aiming at a thorough political re-orientation of the Italian-language press in the United States, and beg the American Government to trust the Italian people rather than to plunge them into a darkness from which only the enemy may benefit."

On April 23, the paper quoted the Administration's answer—a telegram from

## COMMON GROUND

Lowell Mellett, administrative assistant to the President: "Replying to your telegram to the President, please be assured that those now studying the problem presented by the foreign-language press do not believe that solution of the problem lies in suppression of such newspapers."

The paper continues: "It is an honor and a satisfaction for us to have provoked

this clear and highly significant declaration. . . .

"We cannot afford the risk of isolating a large section of the population, which lives in this country, works in this country and for this country, and which needs, more than ever, to be properly led, faithfully informed and intelligently enlightened. . . ."

## THE "DOUBLE V" CAMPAIGN

THE Pittsburgh Courier, important Negro weekly, has inaugurated a "Double V" program for civilians, for victory abroad and victory at home. The program includes the purchase of war bonds and stamps, contributions to blood banks, participation in civilian defense, and conservation of waste materials; a fight against all forms of discrimination based on race, color, creed, or class and against the poll tax and political disfranchisement; the seeking of educational equality; and a fight for equal opportunity in defense industry.

The program was the direct outgrowth of a letter to the Courier by James G. Thompson, "a young man," say the editors, "confused by all of this double talk about democracy and the defense of our way of life." Mr. Thompson wrote:

"Like all true Americans, my greatest desire at this time, this crucial point of our history, is a desire for a complete victory over the forces of evil which threaten our existence today. Behind that desire is also a desire to serve this, my country, in the most advantageous way.

"Most of our leaders are suggesting that we sacrifice every other ambition to the paramount one, victory. With this I agree; but I also wonder if another victory could

not be achieved at the same time. After all, the things that beset the world now are basically the same things which upset the equilibrium of nations internally, states, counties, cities, homes, and even the individual.

"Being an American of dark complexion and some 26 years, these questions flash through my mind: 'Should I sacrifice my life to live half American?' 'Will things be better for the next generation in the peace to follow?' 'Would it be demanding too much to demand full citizenship rights in exchange for the sacrificing of my life?' 'Is the kind of America I know worth defending?' 'Will America be a true and pure Democracy after this war?' 'Will Colored Americans suffer still the indignities that have been heaped upon them in the past?' These and other ques-

tions need answering. I want to know, and I believe every Colored American, who is thinking, wants to know. . . .

"I suggest that while we keep defense and victory in the forefront we don't lose sight of our fight for true democracy at home.

"The V for victory sign is being displayed prominently in all so-called democratic countries which are fighting for victory over aggression, slavery, and tyr-



anny. If this V sign means this to those now engaged in this great conflict, then let Colored Americans adopt the double VV for a double victory. The first V for victory over our enemies from without, the second V for victory over our enemies from within. For surely those who perpetrate these ugly prejudices here are seeking to destroy our democratic form of government as surely as the Axis forces.

"This should not and would not lessen our efforts to bring this conflict to a successful conclusion; but should and would make us stronger to resist these evil forces which threaten us. America could become united as never before and become truly the home of democracy.

"In way of answer to the foregoing questions in a preceding paragraph, I might say that there is no doubt this country is worth defending; things will be different for the next generation; Colored Americans will come into their own, and America will eventually become the true democracy it was designed to be. These things will become a reality in time; but not through any relaxation of the efforts to secure them.

"In conclusion, let me say that though these questions often permeate my mind, I love America and am willing to die for the America I know will someday become a reality."

## HOW ABOUT A FLAG, MR. KNOX?

(An editorial in the April 12 Sunday Chicago Bee.)

SECRETARY of the Navy Frank Knox has announced that Negroes will be admitted into the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. He said that a pattern of military segregation will obtain to the point of having all-Negro crews and a separate naval base. We take it that as soon as a base can be constructed and a few ships built, colored people will be enlisted to man the vessels. Eventually, the Secretary indicated, colored men will be made officers for ships.

It appears that the Navy department is giving colored people everything but a flag. . . . We shall have, if present plans go through, separate ships, Negro officers, a Negro base, and Negro crews.

After we secure all of these, the mighty waters of the seven seas will be ours to help chase the common enemy. The logic behind all of this separation is hard to

see. . . . We cannot understand why Negroes must have a separate base from which ships are to be operated. Nor do we agree that there should be white crews and black crews. America should be strong enough in ways democratic to decree that prejudice will play no part in hampering our war plans. It should decree that the foolhardy idea of having separate ships and bases is absolutely and categorically intolerable and if followed through anticipates double expense and extra time, both of which we can ill-afford in these days of blitzkrieg wars.

We do not know who is asking the Secretary of the Navy for this nation-within-a-nation idea but we have no doubt that he has been ill advised.

It is our hope that in the not too distant future the nation will gear itself to a military program that will, to some degree, absorb the spirit of our democracy and reveal to the world that what we advocate we practice.

## • The Bookshelf •

CONDUCTED BY HENRY C. TRACY

### THESE ARE AMERICANS

*EVE'S STEPCHILDREN.* Selected and edited by Lealon N. Jones. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers. 307 pp. \$3.50

Conceived in Missouri, printed in Idaho, bearing searing or cheering words that blow like soft winds or beat like hail upon the spirit, from north, south, east, and west in many moods and voices, this is perhaps the most American book of the season. In cabins in the Ozarks, in pueblos of New Mexico, in hogans of the Navajos, along the roadside by flat fields bordering Southern rivers, in the pickers' camps of California, on the plantations of the Santee River country, in colonies of Italian, Polish, and Sicilian Americans, in a Jewish quarter and a Black Belt in Chicago, we find that primal, invincible, independent spirit that brings into slow and sometimes agonized being the thing called America and the folk called Americans. Besides this eternal quest for a newer and better way in which there shall be more life, more liberty, and a more rewarding pursuit of happiness, there is a clinging to the known things, the loved things, and the old. This it is that sustains old-stock, new-stock and Amerindian alike, for the human spirit cannot bear being torn up wholly by the roots. That is why the revival of a Wheat Harvest Festival by a Hungarian colony in Wisconsin is a heartening thing, moving to read about and rejuvenating to enjoy. That is why music, which can always sing the past into the future, plays so vital a role in the folk-life everywhere.

*Blue Ridge Country* by Jean Thomas (Duell, Sloan, & Pearce. \$3.00) deals fully and understandingly with the "mountain people," a folk group preserving in spite of every handicap a dignity and distinction of their own. Living and visiting among them, accepted and trusted, the author has recorded personal narratives matched nowhere else for authenticity and interest. Admirably done, this latest of the American Folkways series ranks as one of the finest regional studies that have appeared.

*Old McDonald Had a Farm* by Angus McDonald (Houghton Mifflin. \$2.50), with an Oklahoma setting, tells the veracious story of the winning fight put up by an old-stock preacher-farmer, of whom his son (the author) says, "Old McDonald is the stuff that America is made of." As a preacher he fought to reclaim souls; as a farmer he fought to reclaim a ruined farm—and with no help from soil experts. His native sense and energy halted erosion, built up soil fertility, and made a paying place out of a wrecked homestead.

Carey McWilliams, however, in *Ill Fares the Land* (Little, Brown. \$3.00) shows that with an increasingly large portion of the land owned or dominated by industrialized concerns, a few men of exceptional energy scattered here and there cannot stem the tendency toward operation of farms by and for industrial enterprise—cannot stop the flow of migrant farm workers whose insecurity has become a national problem, nor



guarantee the homestead owner the good life he might have achieved fifty years ago. Faulty functioning of our national economy seems to be at the root of the trouble. This exhaustive study of factual records vastly illuminates the changing pattern in this vital aspect of our social world. COMMON GROUND readers are already familiar with one section of Mr. McWilliams' book, which was published in its pages as "Mexicans to Michigan."

Bolívar, Emil Ludwig's life of the Liberator (Alliance. \$3.50), belongs to all of cultural America, North and South. Devoid of romanticism and hero-worship, this great biography follows the pampered son of a wealthy aristocrat through the most varied and extreme fluctuations of

fortune possible to a human being, till the seed early planted by an obscure tutor, one Rodríguez, flowers in the career of a hero and a life spent recklessly—literally burned out—in the cause of freedom.

A literary event for 1942 is the publication of *Jefferson*, by Saul K. Padover (Harcourt, Brace. \$4.00). Born in Austria, Dr. Padover came to the United States at the age of 15, and is now Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior. His pages show a lively human feeling that makes the book captivating reading. Jefferson comes to life as a person. Packed with human interest, salted with humor, flashing with a genius for the right slant on historic episodes, this work is altogether satisfying.

## NOVELS OF COMPASSION

*In the Night Did I Sing* by O'Kane Foster (Scribners. \$2.50) is typical of a newer fiction that portrays the life of meager privilege and pitiful resources, not to exploit it in the name of "realism," but to aid our understanding of it. Mr. Foster writes of Mexicans near Taos; a community of Penitentes existing today, unassimilated, in the body of what to them is an alien civilization, destructive of their own. Out of sympathy and understanding he has woven for us a pattern of pain and frustration that composes the life of that orphaned people. They have been shouldered out of the way by the aggressive American who neither understands their problem nor tries to. But in their hearts is much of tenderness and a feeling for beauty. Clinging to a meaning that life still has for them, they meet misfortune with a drugged endurance mitigated by song and a masking laughter.

Miguel Angel Menendez in *Nayar* (Farrar & Rinehart. \$2.50) shows a like

sympathy for country folk in southwestern Mexico, living in neglect and obscurity in jungle clearings or hilly wilds. The story follows the fortunes of Ramon, a half-breed, but the most luminous chapters deal with primitive Indians among whom he finds refuge.

In *Hills Beyond Manhattan* by Guido D'Agostino (Doubleday, Doran. \$2.50), a young French architect on the brink of yielding to a cynical defeatism is set right by common folk, the real Americans, whose qualities (once he knows them) in contrast to those of a decadent country-club set, bring him a fresh grip on life. With a somewhat similar theme, Nea Colton's *The Rivers Are Frozen* (Coward-McCann. \$2.50) makes a Basque family living in New York the means of regeneration for a drifting, restless American girl who is ruled by her caprices. The Arteagas maintain their sound family tradition untainted by the looseness and follies all around them.

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*Big Ben*, a novel by Earl Schenck Miers (Westminster. \$2.50), gives us a Negro youth who meets the handicap of color with a fine resolution, faces every problem it creates, and wins through sheer merit, without sacrificing his racial pride and personal integrity. The setting is a northern university. In contrast, the hero of Kenneth S. Davis' *In the Forests of the Night* (Houghton Mifflin. \$2.50), William Kendall, forestry expert, loses his fight against a war-and-woman psychosis because he seeks escape from life instead of facing it. A strong and brilliant first novel based on the author's experience on an official field trip for the U.S. Soil Conservation service. He has captured the symbolism of a wild and desolate land in northern Minnesota and its challenge to human character.

John Weld's *Sabbath Has No End* (Scribners. \$2.50) revives slave days, creates indelible characters, white and colored, and reveals the charm of a natural Negro life-rhythm, but shows that kind masters cannot cure the inherent evil of slavery. Grace, charm, loyalty, faithfulness count for nothing when this is "a white man's world." Southern-born and bred, Mr. Weld knows his backgrounds. Choosing a later period, soon after the Civil War, Chalmers S. Murray in *Here Come Joe Mungin* (Putnam.

\$2.50) has written a regional story of the Gullah negroes of the Sea Islands off South Carolina. He writes with uncompromising realism of these people as he knows them.

The best appraisal of Nelson Algren's *Never Come Morning* (Harper. \$2.50) is found in Richard Wright's introduction to this novel of underworld characters in Chicago's Northwest Side. He speaks of Algren's observation as centered on "those depths of life" which the Bruno Bicks of America represent, and upon "that stratum of our society that is historically footloose, unformed, malleable, restless, devoid of inner stability, unidentified by class allegiances, yet full of hot, honest, blind striving." Naturally such striving most often goes wrong. Its effects are calamitous for those involved now; but the time may come when we shall all be concerned with them. This book gives warning.

*Head of the Line* by Gladys Hasty Carroll (Macmillan. \$2.50) is a collection of excellent short stories, several of which could have been expanded to full length fiction. New England in background, they are more varied and satisfying in content and interest than any similar collection we have seen in years. Whether the vein is pathos or humor, there is depth of understanding in all of them.

## MULTICULTURAL AMERICA

*The Negro Caravan: Writings by American Negroes*, selected and edited by Sterling A. Brown, Arthur P. Davis, and Ulysses Lee (The Dryden Press. \$4.25) is an excellent collection of the work of Negro writers from the 18th century to the present, illuminating a section of America's literary history far too little

known by the general reader. This is material written from the inside out, by Negro authors analyzing and interpreting Negro experience, valid and authentic, with a deep undertone of aspiration.

*Music in America* by David Ewen (Thomas Crowell. \$3.00), who is already familiar to COMMON GROUND readers,

tells the story of our growing appreciation of music from the crude days of 1850—blackfaced shows preferred—to modern symphony concerts for listening thousands. A lively and authentic account of the great leaders, the organizations, and the responding public.

*Slave Songs of the Georgia Sea Islands* by Lydia Parrish (Creative Age Press. \$3.50) is the fruit of twenty-five years of research by one who lived on St. Simon's Island, won the confidence of the Negroes till they sang for her old treasures long hidden from the ears of white folks. Here are unique African melodies, handed down from slave days, and some from even pre-slave tribal sources; the words recorded as sung without the slightest revision. The music is transcribed

by Creighton Churchill and Robert MacGimsey. An illuminating introduction by Olin Downes stresses the contribution made by Negroes to folk music and the creative life of America.

Langston Hughes in *Shakespeare in Harlem* (Knopf. \$2.50) persuades his muse to go where there are lonely people and the blues come easy and often, where the WPA is the only chance left and that may fail—to mingle with them and cut some merry capers and teach them to end a groan with a smile. This is his first volume of collected poems since 1932.

*Plain-Chant for America* by Katherine Garrison Chapin (Harper. \$2.00) has distinction, power, and depth of sympathy in its poems and ballads.

## DEMOCRATIC AMERICA IN THE WORLD STRUGGLE

*The Making of Tomorrow* by Raoul de Roussy de Sales (Reynal & Hitchcock. \$3.00) gives a clear analysis of that complex of hopes, dreams, faiths, conflicts, and idealisms which we call America. In that complex, democracy is identified with the nation itself. With it is combined an essential Christianity distinct from creeds and professions and allied with a common feeling among men and women of every origin or persuasion. Hence this author finds hope for Tomorrow in this sound faith of the people, embodied in our Constitution and inherent in our way of life: a faith vital enough to oppose the Nazist revolt against every principle for which this country stands.

Aware that democratic faith and policy rest on moral law, Professor W. T. Stace in *The Destiny of Western Man* (Reynal & Hitchcock. \$3.00) reasons that such law rests on natural law and is a develop-

ment, through historical phases, from the complete nature of man; not an arbitrary invention of priests or theologians. He finds the meaning of the present world struggle in an open revolt on the part of followers of a Nietzschean dogma and totalitarian myth against that sound ethical and rational creed which Western Man has built through the centuries, to deny which is to deform and corrupt the very nature of civilized human beings.

Dr. Oliver L. Reiser writes of *A New Earth and a New Humanity* (Creative Age Press. \$2.50) not as a millennial dream but as an urgent necessity, and one that can be achieved by scientific and humanistic means. Paralleling the reasoning of Professor Stace, but with emphasis on the new corrective research of Einstein, Infeld, Eddington, and others, he shows that codes of ethical and humane dealing are linked with the laws

of the physical universe and equally valid. His view supports a scientific humanism in which all people can reasonably unite for the abolishing of power-politics and exploitation of the weak.

From a realistic standpoint, George E. Taylor of the Institute of Pacific Relations writes *America in the New Pacific* (Macmillan, \$.75) to make clear just what part America has played in her relations with Asia and why an entirely new approach to these problems is imperative. His work as a journalist and his experience as a teacher in Chinese universities qualifies him to write authoritatively of the impacts of West upon East since the First World War. Somewhat unexpectedly, an analysis of anti-Semitism by a group of collaborating experts under the direction of Isacque Graeber and Steuart H. Britt, *The Jews in a Gentile World* (Macmillan, \$.40) links itself with the foregoing, for it shows not only that the Nazi attack on Jews is merely the spearhead of an attack on all humane civilization but that

the real issue is between basic beliefs that Jew and Christian share in common, and pagan cults combined with tribal myths. Racial, social, economic phases are covered in this scholarly work.

*The Philippines* by Joseph Ralston Hayden (Macmillan, \$.90) is outstanding among timely books on these Islands and the part played by America in the national development of their people. Beginning with a sketch of that pioneer educator and leader in practical idealism, John Chrysostom Early, we have here proof of what the American spirit has done and can do for an Asiatic people, without taint of imperialism. This survey shows the need of gradual application of economic independence, grants the right of 16,000,000 Filipinos to become a free and independent nation, points to serious problems yet unsolved, hints of improvement to this stock by racial admixture. Truly a comprehensive work, based on sound research and the author's experience as Vice-Governor in the Islands.

## IN BRIEF

*The American Idea* by Eugene T. Adams and others (Harper, \$.25) is a discussion by nine members of the faculty of Colgate University of what we have achieved in government, philosophy, science, education and the liberal arts.

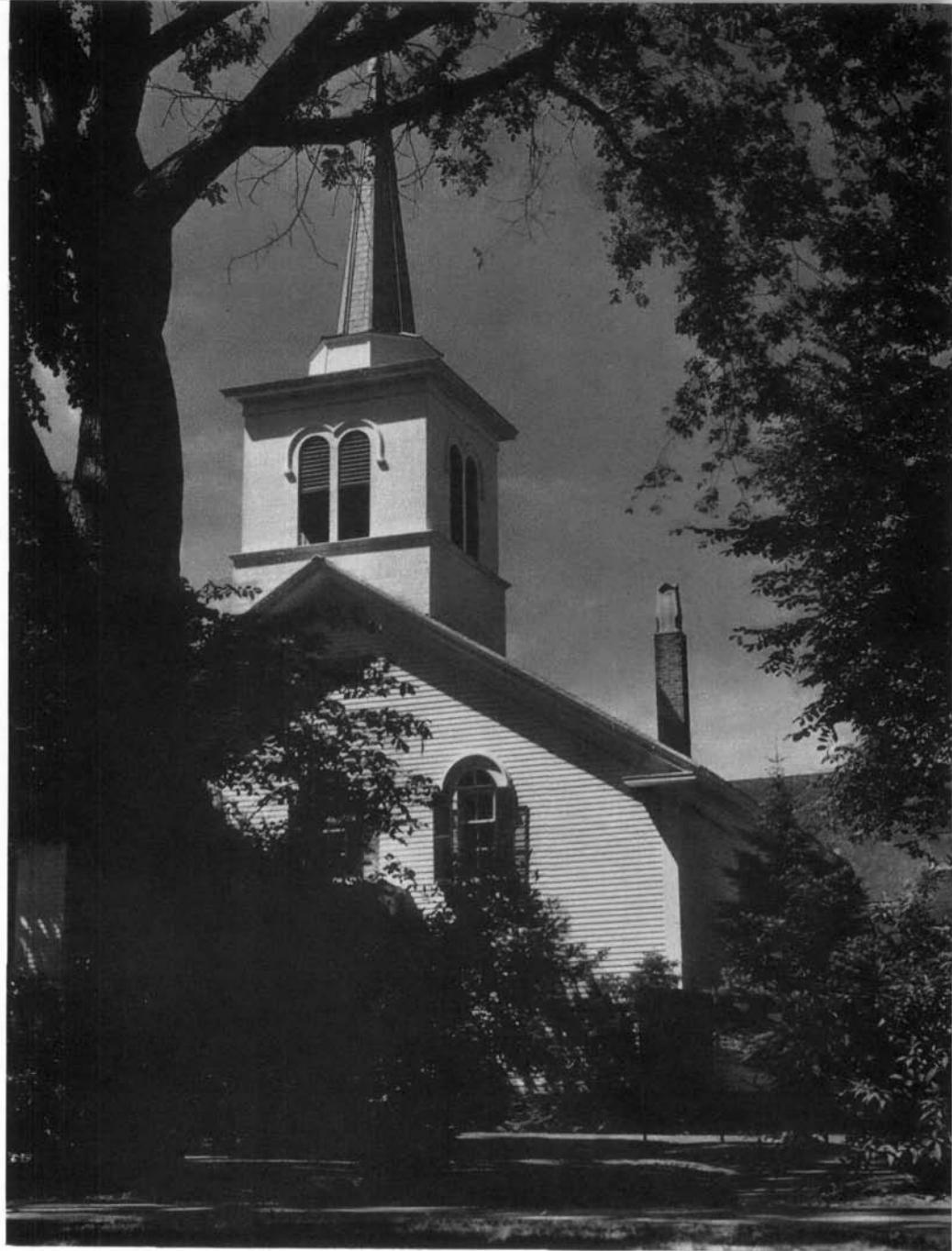
*Color, Class, and Personality* by Robert L. Sutherland (American Council on Education, \$.125) interprets the findings of the American Youth Commission's studies on Negro youth. Stresses the economic factor in betterment; a penetrating summary of all points.

*Norwegian-American Studies and Records*, published by the Norwegian-American Historical Association (Northfield, Minnesota, \$.20), gives ten articles of

special interest in its field. Sketches of Rølvaag and Evinrude are included.

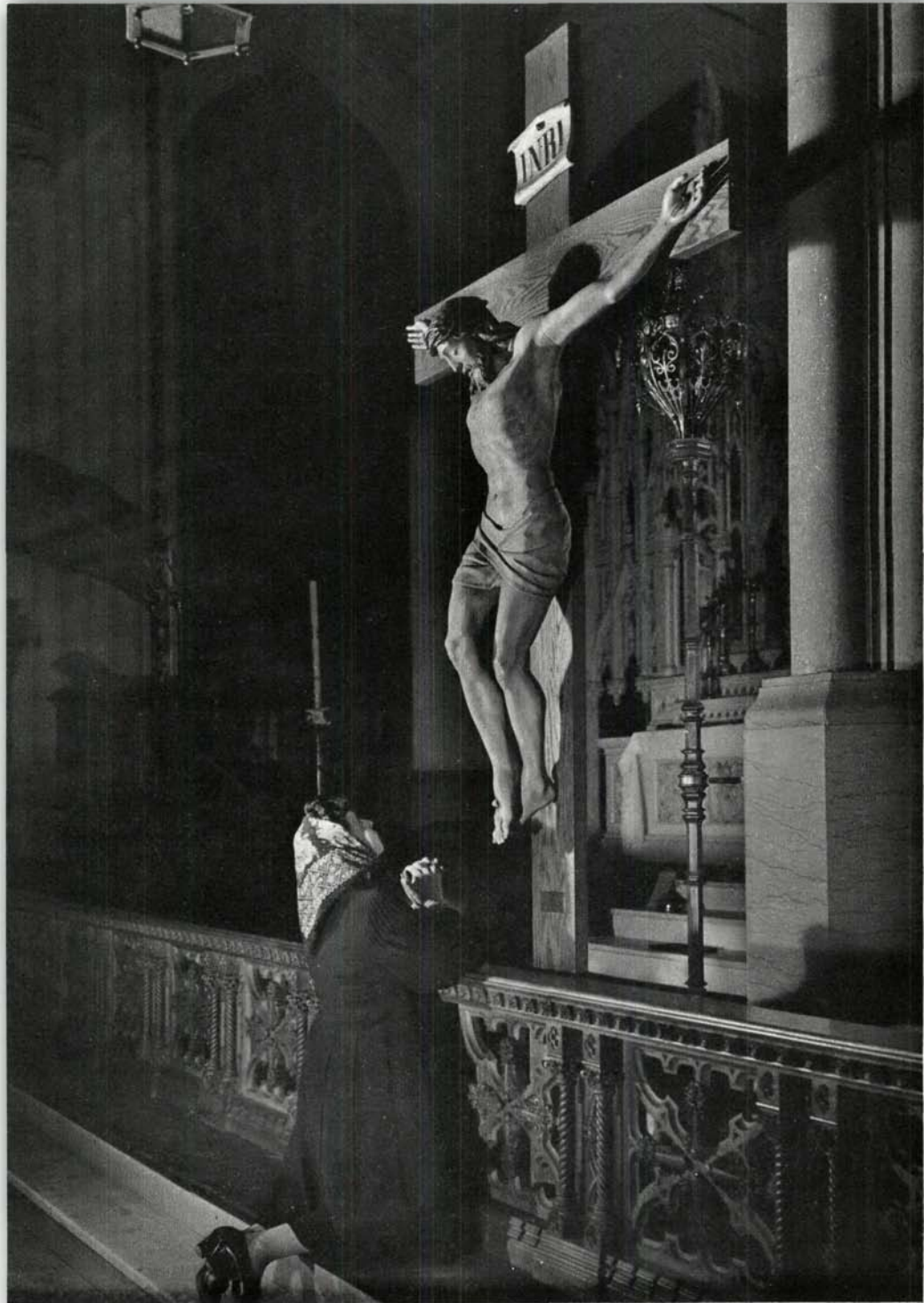
*The Waldenses in the New World* by George B. Watts (Duke University Press, \$.35) sheds much light on this persecuted people and surviving groups or influences in the United States.

*The Good Inheritance* by Norman Cousins (Coward-McCann, \$.30) is a brilliant study of the contest between Athens and Sparta—a democratic ideology against that of martial discipline and brute force—a parallel with the present world struggle. The book is a challenge to all free peoples to avoid the internal dissensions that ruined a noble experiment in that ancient world.



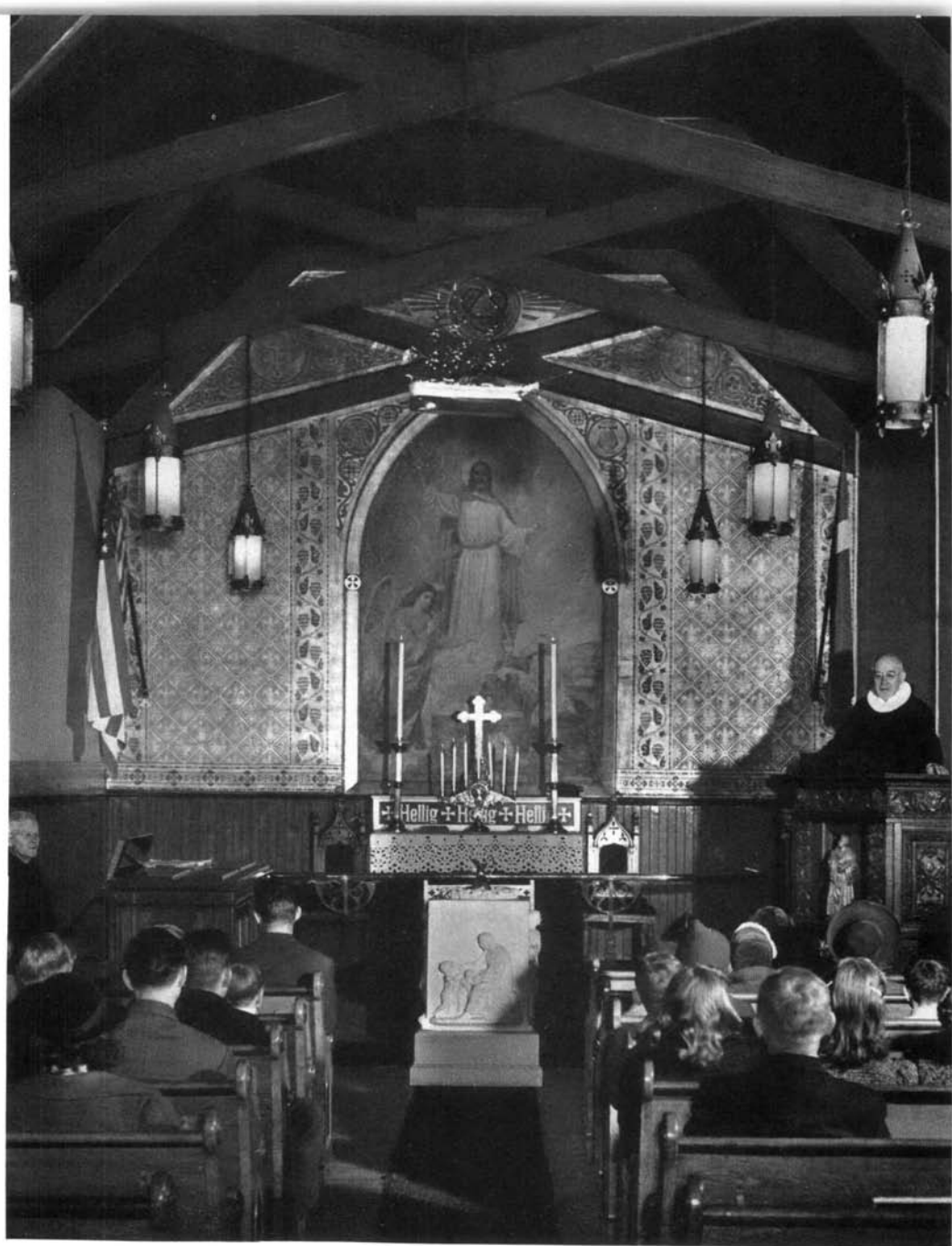
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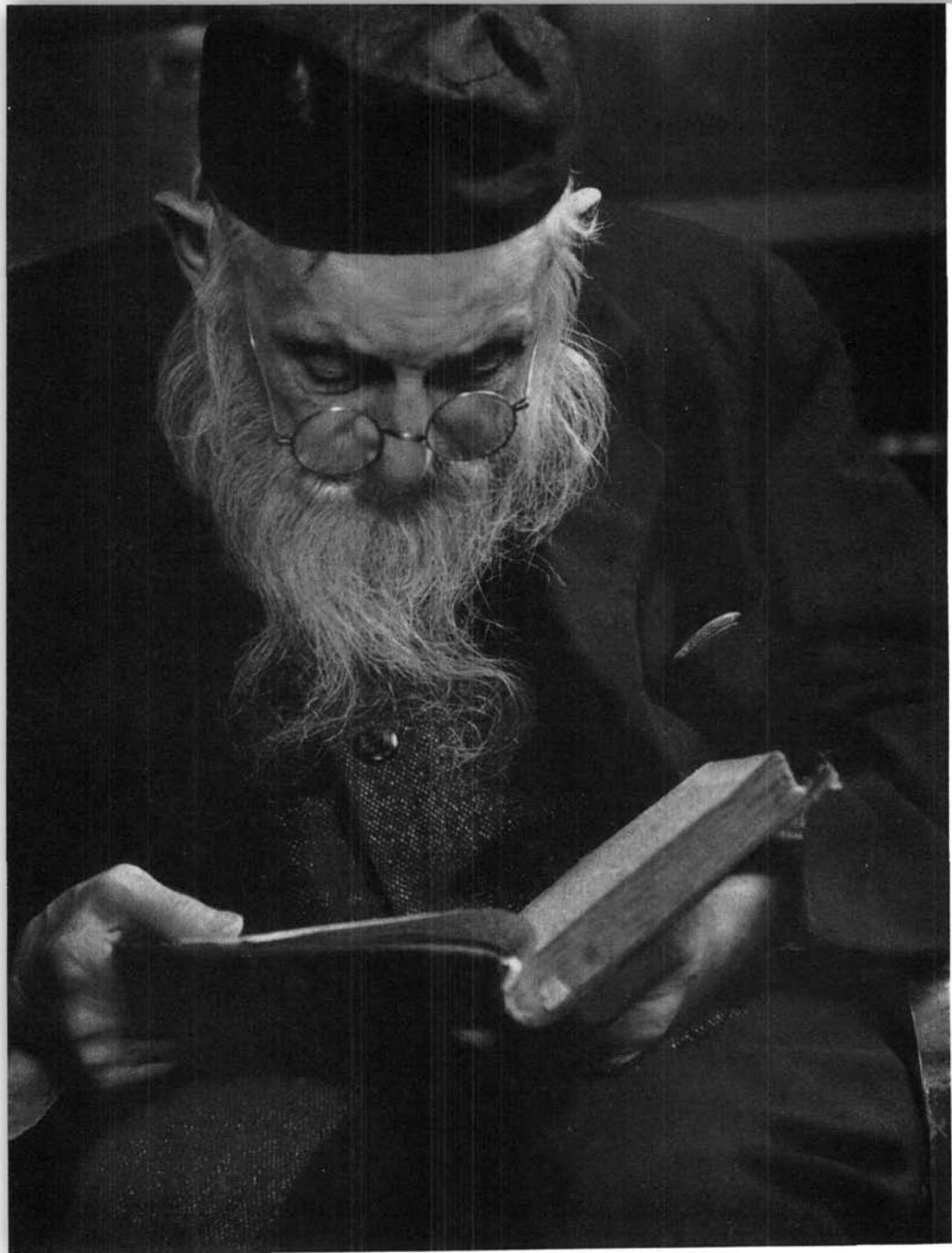


ROMAN CATHOLIC

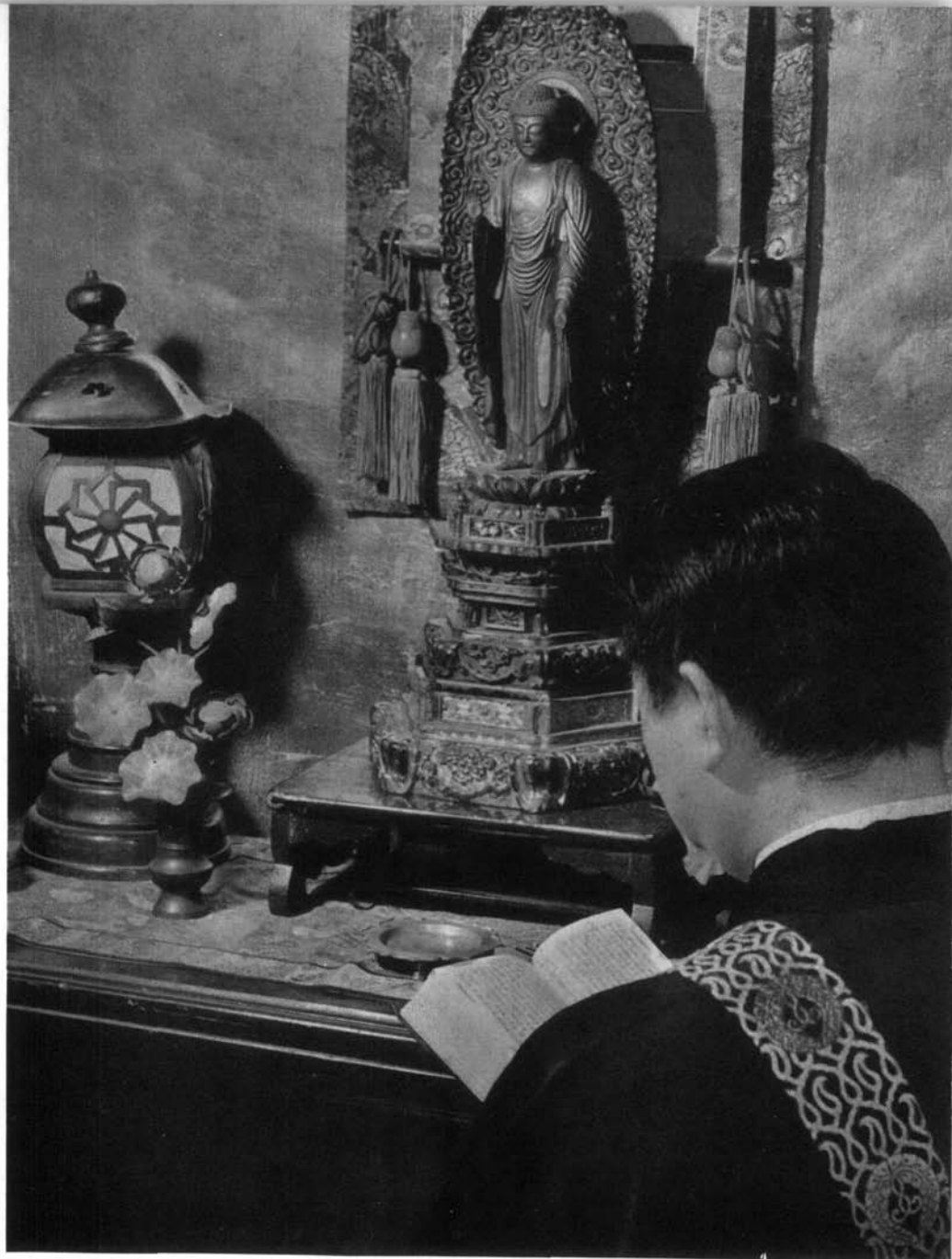




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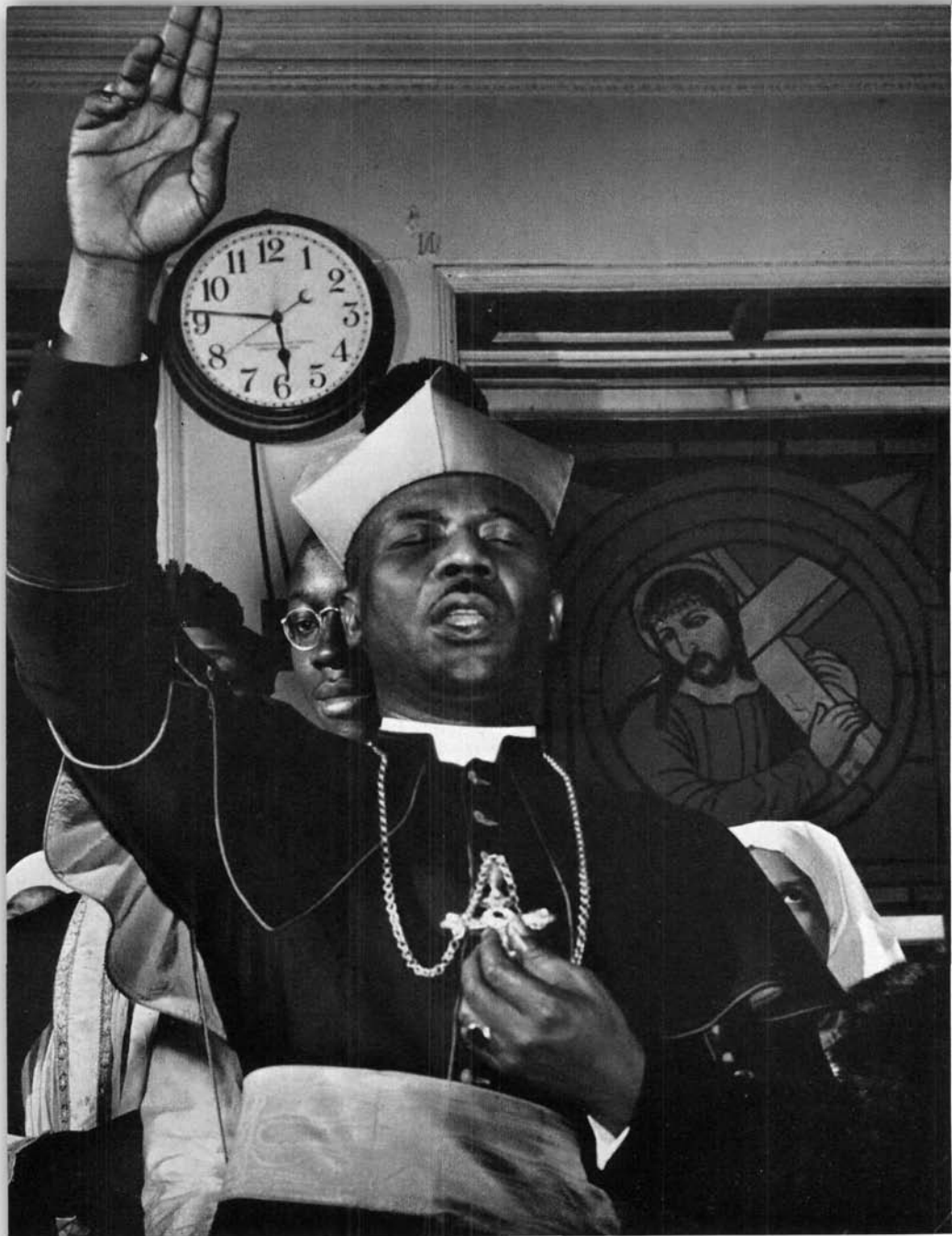


JEWISH SCHOLAR



BUDDHIST





NEGRO BISHOP (EPISCOPALIAN)



ARMENIAN CHOIR GIRLS



MOSLEM